HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.

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FROM THE ACCESSION OF ALEXANDER III. TO THE UNION

BY

PATRICK FRASER TYTLER, ESQ. F.R.S.

IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOL. IV.

EDINBURGH:
WILLIAM P. NIMMO.
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

PATRICK FRASER TYTLER.

THE lives of literary men do not ordinarily present to us the stirring events by which those of eminent statesmen and warriors are distinguished. Their biographies consist generally of little more than an account of their works; still, the importance attributed by posterity to their labours adds an interest to the circumstances in which it may have been their lot to be cast.

Amongst the many eminent men to whom Scotland is indebted for the honourable place which she holds in the literature of Europe, there are few to whom she owes more than to the Tytlers of Woodhouselee. This family, long settled in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, produced in succession William Tytler, Alexander Fraser Tytler afterwards Lord Woodhouselee, and Patrick Fraser Tytler, who, by the interest and value of their writings—extending over nearly a century—have done honour to themselves, and have contributed in no small degree to elucidate the history of their country.

The first of the family distinguished by his devotion to literature was William Tytler, (the grandfather of the subject of this Memoir,) who was born in Edinburgh on the 12th of October 1711. He was the son of Alexander Tytler, a Writer to the Signet in that city, who enjoyed the highest reputation for the probity and excel-

lence of his private character. Like his father, William Tytler studied law, and became a Writer to the Signet in 1744. But although carrying on a legal business of considerable extent, he found leisure to indulge his taste for literary composition, and obtained considerable fame by publishing, in 1759, his well-known vindication of Mary Queen of Scots. This work, entitled, "An Inquiry, Historical and Critical, into the Evidence against Mary Queen of Scots, and an Examination of the Histories of Dr Robertson and Mr Hume with respect to that Evidence," was so favourably received by the public as to pass through four editions. In it Tytler sought to vindicate the memory of the unfortunate Queen, by bringing forward many circumstantial proofs that she was innocent of a complicity in the death of her husband Darnley, and attempting to shew that the letters alleged to have been written by her to the Earl of Bothwell were spurious.

This Vindication received the commendations of Samuel Johnson, Smollett, and other eminent literary men, who acknowledged the author's ingenuity, although they did not agree with the conclusion at which he arrived.

In addition to this remarkable publication, Tytler made several other interesting contributions to Scottish literature, among which may be noticed, "The Poetical Remains of James I., King of Scotland, with a Dissertation on the Life and Writings of that Monarch."

After spending a long life in the tranquil enjoyment of literary ease, Tytler died at the family seat of Woodhouselee on Sept. 12, 1792, in the eighty-first year of his age. A high sense of honour, an uncorrupted integrity, a manly opposition to every kind of depravity or vice, were the distinguishing features of his character; and he died without leaving an enemy or detractor in the world.

Alexander Fraser Tytler, his eldest son, better known, perhaps, by his judicial title of Lord Woodhouselee, was born at Edinburgh on the 4th October 1747. He was educated first at the High School of that city, and afterwards at a private school in the neighbourhood of London. When he had reached the age of seventeen he

entered the University of Edinburgh, and, having passed through the course of education preparatory to a legal life, was called to the bar in the year 1770, when he was in his twenty-third year. He married, in 1776, Anne Fraser, eldest daughter of Mr William Fraser of Belnain, Writer to the Signet, by whom he had a family of eight children, of whom Patrick, the future historian of Scotland, was the youngest.

In 1780 he was appointed Professor of Universal History in the University of Edinburgh, and discharged the duties of the chair with great ability and success. As Professor of History he published, in 1782, his well-known "Elements of General History,"—a work the merits of which have been generally recognised, and which is still a standard class-book on the subject.

He published anonymously, in 1790, an "Essay on the Principles of Translation." This treatise speedily obtained a great reputation, and deserves to be regarded as one of the best introductions to criticism in the English language.

In the same year he was appointed, through the interest of Lord Melville, Judge-Advocate of Scotland; and, about nine years afterwards, was raised to the Bench under the title of Lord Woodhouselee.

Besides the works already mentioned, and several smaller productions, Lord Woodhouselee published an elegantly written memoir of Henry Home, Lord Kames, which contains notices of many of the literary Scotsmen of the last century. He died on the 5th January 1813, in the sixty-sixth year of his age.

Patrick Fraser Tytler, the fourth son and youngest child of Lord Woodhouslee, was born at Edinburgh on the 30th of August 1791. He was educated at the High School there, under Mr (afterwards Professor) Christison and Dr Adam of that seminary. These gentlemen were distinguished for their success as teachers, and under their care a large number of pupils, who afterwards filled eminent positions in life, received the elements of a liberal education. As a boy, Tytler gave little promise of that devotion to literary pursuits by which he was to be afterwards distinguished. He was, however, beloved by his schoolfellows for the generous nature of his disposi-

tion, and for his spirited and manly character. His father early remarked the ability which lay under his apparent carelessness and inattention. "You do not understand the boy," he would say. "I tell you he is a wonderful boy. Look at the eager expression of his countenance when listening to conversation far above his years; he is drinking in every word. You tell me he never opens an improving book; that it must always be an amusing story for him. I am much mistaken if he does not read grave enough books by and by."

Tytler was fortunate in having as his tutor a young man who afterwards earned some reputation by his writings—the Rev. John Black, minister of the parish of Coylton, in Ayrshire, and author of an elegant "Life of Tasso." Under the care of this accomplished guide Tytler made rapid progress, and acquired that taste for reading which he afterwards turned to so good an account. At a somewhat later period he enjoyed the assistance in his studies of another gentleman afterwards highly distinguished—the Rev. John Lee—who, after filling several important academical offices, died Principal of the University of Edinburgh.

In his youth Tytler had also the great advantage of participating in the literary society which his father gathered around him. He may, indeed, be said to have breathed a literary atmosphere from his boyhood. Henry Mackenzie, (the "Man of Feeling,") Scott, Sydney Smith, Mackintosh, and Jeffrey, were his father's frequent guests; and young Tytler had the privilege of listening to the brilliant conversation of these eminent men.

Intending that his son should enter the profession of the law, Lord Woodhouselee resolved that, before beginning his legal studies, he should spend a year at an academical institution in England. Accordingly, Tytler was sent to Chobham House School, and placed under the care of the Rev. Charles Jerram, a gentleman of great worth. Under this excellent master he made much progress, particularly in the art of writing Latin verses, and in the study of the Greek poets. At the same time he did not neglect his general reading; and when he returned to Edinburgh, he brought with him

an increased taste for that polite literature which was the delight of his future life.

The following extract of a letter, which he wrote after his return from Chobham to his brother Alexander, is interesting as shewing the early period at which his love for the study of history developed itself. It is dated June 14, 1810 :—"I now come to give you some idea of my studies. When I first went to England, from having always lived in a literary family, where Mr Black and papa were continually talking upon learned subjects, as well as having read a few books, I had picked up more general knowledge than is commonly to be found amongst the boys at an English school. This made me in some degree looked up to, and balanced my deficiency in classical knowledge. To this last I applied tooth and nail; reading by myself, and often getting up in the winter mornings to study by candle-light. At last I began to understand and like Greek, and to make some progress in Latin versification. My vein improved amazingly at Chobham. The study of Virgil and Horace, of Milton and Thomson, was to me truly delightful. I often gave exercises in English verse; and Mr Jerram was sometimes pleased to express his approbation, and to ask for a copy of them. But I acquired a high relish for another noble branch of literature, and which I am at present pursuing with the greatest pleasure. I mean *history*. I there read Robertson's admirable History of Charles V., and wrote short notes upon it. Since that I have been reading Machiavel's History of Florence, Watson's Philip II., Gibbon's Decline and Fall, Clarendon's noble work on the Rebellion, Sully's Memoirs, Clarendon's Life, Voltaire's Charles XII., Papa's Elements, Chevalier Ramsay's Life of Turenne, Junius's Letters, the Life of Lord Chatham; and I am now engaged with Hume, and Rapin's Acta Regia. What do you think of history, my dear Sandie? To me it seems the noblest of all studies. To say that it is entertaining is its least praise. It is the school of statesmen and warriors; and the pleasure, next to living in the times, and being a witness to the actions of these, is that of reading their lives and actions."*

* Burgon's Memoir, p. 65.

About the close of the year 1809 Tytler entered the University of Edinburgh, and began with enthusiasm the study of law. But while he was working hard, along with his young friend Archibald (now Sir Archibald) Alison, at the Institutes of Heineccius, his favourite studies were not forgotten. At the request of his father, he wrote, in 1810, a poem, which he entitled, "The Woodhouselee Masque," and which was allowed by competent judges to be a most graceful performance. This, and other unpublished poems, and also the elegant poetical translations which exist in some of his minor works, display a genius for poetry which, had it been cultivated, would have entitled him to rank amongst the poets of his country.

Tytler was called to the Scottish Bar on the 3d of July 1813; shortly after which he had to mourn the loss of his excellent father, Lord Woodhouselee, who had long suffered from a painful disease.

In the beginning of 1814, Tytler embraced the opportunity, which the peace of that year afforded, to visit France, in company with William and Archibald Alison, and Mr D. Anderson of Moredun. This tour lasted from April to June, and afforded the most lively gratification to the young tourists. They had the honour of being presented, while in Paris, to many distinguished men, including the great Platoff, and enjoyed the sight of innumerable celebrities. A record of this tour is preserved in an anonymous work, in two volumes, entitled, "Travels in France during the Years 1814–15, comprising a Residence at Paris during the stay of the Allied Armies, and at Aix at the period of the Landing of Bonaparte." It was understood to be the production of Mr Archibald Alison, and contained certain chapters which Tytler contributed.

Through the influence of Alexander Maconochie, Esq., afterwards Lord Meadowbank, then Lord-Advocate, Tytler was appointed, when he had only been three years at the bar, a Junior Crown Counsel in Exchequer—an office worth £150 per annum. He also made some progress as a pleader at the bar. But literature and historical inquiry, although not engrossing all his attention, still

occupied his leisure hours, and induced him to contribute various papers to literary journals.

During the years 1817 and 1818, he wrote several articles for *Blackwood's Magazine*, then in its infancy. These were, "Remarks on Lacunar Strevilinense;" an address "To my Dog;" and a fanciful fragment, under the title of "A Literary Romance."

The fatigues of his professional and other duties rendered him desirous of making a fresh tour for the benefit of his health; and he visited Norway in 1818, in company with Mr D. Anderson of Moredun. While on their tour they happened to be at Drontheim, when Bernadotte, after being crowned King of Sweden, made his entry, with his son Prince Oscar, into that city. The young Scotsmen had the honour of being presented to the king, by whom they were graciously received, and invited to dine with his Majesty.

The first separate work which Tytler published was his "Life of James Crichton of Cluny, commonly called the Admirable Crichton." It appeared in 1819, and was dedicated to the memory of his father, Lord Woodhouselee.

In this interesting memoir Tytler brought together the various materials bearing on the life and exploits of this extraordinary personage, whose remarkable attainments made Scotland celebrated throughout Europe in the sixteenth century. By a careful examination of the contemporary literature of the period in which Crichton flourished, Tytler successfully refuted the attempts which had been made by several authors to discredit the evidence on which his fame had so long rested.

Tytler's fondness for antiquarian research is nowhere more apparent than in this biography, which may be said to have left little to be gleaned by subsequent inquirers. The work was well received by the public; and a second edition was called for in 1823.

In 1822 was founded the Bannatyne Club, of which Tytler was one of the original members. This literary society, founded on the model of the Roxburghe Club, was formed by Sir W. Scott, Thomas Thomson, David Laing, and some other enthusiastic Scottish antiquaries.

It existed until 1860 ; and, during that long period, issued to its members a series of works which have been described as forming the greatest, the most important, and the most splendid disclosures that have been made of the latent historical treasures of Scotland.

Following the example of the Roxburghe Club, the members of the Bannatyne celebrated the anniversary of their institution by an elegant symposium. At these banquets original compositions were sung by such of the members as were of a poetical temperament. Their songs, or "garlands," as they were termed, were afterwards printed in a sumptuous style for the use of the members. Sir W. Scott produced the first, "Quhairin the President speaketh," and was followed by Tytler, who contributed three songs, which were quaintly described as having been "Brevit be ane lernit Councillar in the Kingis Chekar," and which displayed a considerable amount of humour and poetical ability.

In addition to the volumes printed at the expense of the Club generally, it was, if not a condition of membership, at least expected that a volume should be printed by each of the members, and presented to the rest. Tytler, accordingly, in conjunction with his friends Mr Hog of Newliston and Mr Adam Urquhart, contributed a volume of "Memoirs of the Wars carried on in Scotland and Ireland, 1689–91, by Major-General Hugh Mackay." This curious volume was printed in 1833.

Tytler's attention was at this time nearly equally divided between law and literature, and, as it has commonly been supposed that a literary man could not be a good lawyer, it seemed necessary that he should make his election between them, for success in his future career. But a compromise suited him better, and so he published, in 1823, "An Account of the Life and Works of Sir T. Craig of Riccarton," the author of a celebrated treatise on the Feudal Law of Scotland. Craig had been a man of studious and retired habits, and mixed but little in the factions and intrigues of his time. Tytler, while recording the facts in the uneventful life of the great lawyer, gave an interest to the work by incorporating many notices of the

eminent statesmen who were his contemporaries during the period between 1538 and 1608. This work was well received by the members of the legal faculty; but, while it served to maintain its author's literary reputation, it failed to increase his practice at the bar.

Tytler's agreeable manners and joyous temperament made him a prominent member of the Midlothian troop of Yeomanry Cavalry, which numbered then, as it does still, many young men of rank connected with the Scottish metropolis. An incident which occurred in 1824 was the cause of much merriment amongst the troop, and called forth several of those amusing lyrical effusions in which Tytler so much excelled. "He had planned a quiet afternoon with his brother, under the paternal roof of Woodhouselee, and, with that view, had stolen away from his companions and the prospect of duty on the Portobello sands. But he was quickly missed at head-quarters; his intended line of march anticipated; and a corporal's troop, with a led horse, and a mock warrant for seizure, were despatched to apprehend and bring back the deserter. Tytler, the instant he espied the approach of this band, escaped by a back door, and took shelter in the glen above Woodhouselee. He remained there until he thought the danger must be over, and then ventured to return to the house; but ill had he calculated on the sharpness of the lawyer-soldiers of the Lothian Yeomanry. He was captured at the very threshold by the ambush which awaited his return, deprived of his arms, mounted on the led horse, and carried off in triumph to the military encampment at Musselburgh. The entire pantomime so touched his fancy, that he turned the incident into a song that same evening, and sang it the next day, (to the air of 'The Groves of Blarney,') at the mess table, amid the applause and laughter of his delighted companions. He confessed how 'Private Tytler, forgetting quite, sir,' the heinousness of desertion,—and in defiance of

> 'That truth, the soul of discipline,—
> Most undutifully, in the month of July,
> Set out for Woodhouselee to dine.'

The enemy's approach, and his own retreat to the glen he graphically described, as well as the exceeding discomfort to which he had been subjected as he

'Shrouded sat beneath the pine.'"*

This song, called "The Deserter," and several others, were privately printed, in 1825, as "The Songs of the Edinburgh Troop."

Tytler and his yeomanry troop did good service on occasion of a great fire which happened in Edinburgh at that time. They were on duty for the purpose of guarding the effects which the inhabitants were endeavouring to save from the conflagration. And to a happy suggestion of Tytler the preservation of the Advocates' Library from the flames may be said to be due. He suggested that the roof of the building in which the books were contained should be covered with wet blankets, and personally assisted in having this work done. The expedient was fortunately effectual, and that noble collection of books was saved.

From his intimacy with Sir Walter Scott, whose antiquarian tastes and literary labours led him to inquire minutely into almost every circumstance connected with Scottish history, Tytler derived much advantage. It was the advice of this great man that he should concentrate his energies on a historical work, which would supply a desideratum in Scottish literature. Scott possessed, in an eminent degree, the talent for imbuing his circle of friends with the same enthusiasm for literary enterprises which was characteristic of his own nature. He found in Tytler one of congenial sympathies; and while his friend was on a visit to Abbotsford, in 1823, he had seriously urged him to undertake the task of writing a history of Scotland.

No one would have been so competent for such an enterprise as Sir Walter himself; but the multifarious nature of his other literary pursuits deprived him of the leisure necessary for the great amount of preliminary research which such a work involves. The subject was one, however, in which he was deeply interested; and as he at

* Burgon's Memoir, p. 166.

one time cherished the hope that an opportunity might occur when he might be enabled to devote his own energies to its treatment, he had collected various anecdotes from Scottish history for the purpose. These he afterwards published as the "Tales of a Grandfather," one of his most popular works.

The following interesting account of the circumstances to which we owe Tytler's invaluable work, is given in a letter written by Mr Pringle of Whytbank to Mr James Tytler in 1854. The historian had been on a visit to Mr Pringle at Yair, and, accompanied by that gentleman, had spent a most agreeable day at Abbotsford :—"While we were riding home at night," continues Mr Pringle,—"I remember the place ; it was just after we had forded the Tweed at Birdside,—your brother told me, that in the course of that evening Sir Walter Scott had taken him aside, and suggested to him the scheme of writing a history of Scotland. Sir Walter stated that, some years before, the booksellers had urged him to undertake such a work, and that he had at one time seriously contemplated it. The subject was very congenial to his tastes ; and he thought that by interspersing the narrative with romantic anecdotes illustrative of the manners of his countrymen, he could render such a work popular. But he soon found, while engaged in preparing his materials, that something more was wanted than a popular romance,—that a right history of Scotland was yet to be written ; but that there were ample materials for it in the national records, in collections of documents both private and public, and in Scottish authors whose works had become rare or were seldom perused. The research, however, which would be required for bringing to light, arranging and digesting these materials, he soon saw would be far more than he had it in his power to give to the subject ; and it would be a work of tedious and patient labour, which must be pursued not in Scotland only, but amongst the national collections of records in London, and wherever else such documents may have been preserved. But such a labour his official duties and other avocations would not allow him to bestow upon it. He had, there-

fore, ended in a resolution to confine his undertaking to a collection of historical anecdotes for the amusement of the rising generation, calculated to impress upon their memories the worthy deeds of Scottish heroes, and inspire them with sentiments of nationality. He also mentioned that the article on the Culloden Papers, published in the *Quarterly Review* for 1816, which I have always considered as one of the most attractive as well as characteristic of all his writings, had been originally conceived in the form of a portion of an introductory essay to the contemplated historical work, which was now likely to go no further.

"He then proposed to your brother to enter on the undertaking, and remarked to him, that he knew his tastes and favourite pursuits lay so strongly in the line of history, and the history of his native country must have such peculiar interest for him, that the labour could not fail to be congenial to him; that though the requisite researches would consume a great deal of time and thought, he had the advantage of youth on his side, and might live to complete the work, which, if executed under a deep sense of the importance of historical truth, would confer a lasting benefit on his country; and he ended with offering all the aid in his power for obtaining access to the repositories of information, as well as advice in pursuing the necessary investigations.

"I asked my friend if the suggestion pleased him? He replied, that the undertaking appeared very formidable; that I knew he had always been fond of historical pursuits, and though he confessed he had frequently cherished an ambition for becoming an historical author, yet it had never entered into his mind to attempt a history of his own country, as he knew too well the difficulties which he would have to encounter, especially those of attaining accuracy, and realising his own conception of what a history of Scotland ought to be; but that the suggestion, coming from such a quarter, as well as the offered assistance, was not to be disregarded. You may be sure that I encouraged him to the best of my power; for though I knew how much it was likely to withdraw his attention from his

professional avocations, yet I also knew how much more congenial a pursuit it would prove, and how much more he was likely to attain to excellence, and establish his reputation in this channel. It was, therefore, with much satisfaction that I soon afterwards learned from him that he had entered seriously on the undertaking."*

Before the first two volumes of the "History of Scotland" made their appearance, Tytler communicated an elegant paper to the Royal Society of Edinburgh, which was published in its *Transactions* in 1826. It is entitled, "An Historical and Critical Introduction to an Inquiry into the Revival of the Greek Literature in Italy after the Dark Ages."

In March 1826 Tytler was married to Rachel, daughter of Thomas Hog, Esq., of Newliston,—a lady to whom he had been long attached. This union afforded him unmixed happiness, which was only terminated by the early death of his wife in 1835. After his marriage, Tytler established himself in 36 Melville Street, Edinburgh, where he began the preparation of his History. He also published, anonymously, at this time, a life of John Wycliff, the precursor of the English Reformation.

After his marriage, Tytler entered upon his historical labours with the utmost enthusiasm. As the result of two years of unremitting exertion, the first volume appeared in March 1828, and was followed by the second in 1829. These volumes were favourably received, and were reviewed by Sir Walter Scott in an able article in the *Quarterly* for 1829. Sir Walter concluded his characteristic paper by referring to the laborious task thus begun, and wishing the author God speed—

> "For long, though pleasing, is the way,
> And life, alas! allows but an ill winter's day."

He also expressed the hope that Tytler, young, ardent, and competent to the task, would not delay to prosecute it with the same spirit which he had already displayed.

Tytler appears at first to have had some difficulty in obtaining a

* Burgon's Memoir, p. 175.

suitable publisher for his History, and had calculated on but a moderate success for this first instalment of his great work. He was agreeably disappointed when the sale of the first edition of these two volumes exceeded one thousand copies. A fair success attended the publication of the other volumes, which appeared successively in 1831, 1834, 1837, 1840, 1842, and 1843.

In the further prosecution of his labours, Tytler visited London in 1830, to consult the manuscripts in the State Paper Office and in the British Museum. While in London he endeavoured to secure the succession to the office of Historiographer for Scotland, when it should become vacant. This appointment was then held by the venerable Dr Gillies, who was in the eighty-third year of his age. Tytler was warmly received by many of the first literary men of the metropolis, and was engaged by Mr Murray to write a collection of biographies of illustrious Scotsmen, for a series of popular works then projected by that eminent publisher.

This very interesting work accordingly appeared as "Lives of Scottish Worthies," in 1831–33. It contained notices of the following twelve Scottish celebrities:—Alexander III., Michael Scott the wizard of Scotland, Wallace, Bruce, Barbour, Wyntoun, Fordun, James I., Henryson, Dunbar, Gawin Douglas, and Sir David Lyndsay.

In consequence of a change of ministry, Tytler lost his Exchequer appointment in 1830, which rendered him more dependent on his literary exertions. The failing health of his wife shortly afterwards induced him, as he was no longer necessitated to reside in Edinburgh, to try the effect of a change to a southern climate. He removed his family accordingly to Torquay, where they resided for a year. He also spent some time at Rothesay in Bute.

Notwithstanding the interruptions caused by his changes of residence about this time, occasioned by the most ardent attachment to his amiable and accomplished wife, Tytler found leisure to write a "Life of Sir Walter Raleigh," and a "Historical View of the Progress of Discovery in America." These works formed part of a series issued by Messrs Oliver and Boyd, under the title of "The

Edinburgh Cabinet Library," and were very popular. Of his Life of Raleigh new editions were called for in 1840, 1844, 1846, and 1847.

From his fondness for research among the national archives, and his familiarity with the contents of the State Paper Office in London, Tytler was, in 1834, desirous of obtaining a permanent appointment of a congenial nature. As the keepership of the records in the Chapter House of Westminster (to which a salary of £400 a year was attached) was then vacant, Tytler became a candidate for that appointment. He was, however, unsuccessful, and the office was bestowed on Sir Francis Palgrave.

In the following year, he suffered a severe blow to his domestic happiness through the death of his wife, which he bore with Christian resignation. By religious meditation, and by attention to the education of his youthful family, he strove to comfort himself under this painful bereavement.

He was destined to experience a great disappointment in 1836. On the death of Dr Gillies, who survived till he was in his eighty-ninth year, Tytler fully expected the appointment of Historiographer for Scotland. A promise had actually been made to his father, Lord Woodhouselee, that he should have this honour conferred on him; but, by an unlooked-for change of ministry, the office was otherwise disposed of. It was bestowed on George Brodie, Esq., Advocate.

From his familiarity with the national archives, Tytler was, in 1836, examined, by a committee of the House of Commons as to the best plan for rendering these documents available to historical inquirers. His evidence tended to shew the folly of attempting to print *in extenso* the whole of these ancient records. He suggested, however, the propriety of publishing lists or calendars of these papers, which should, at the same time, embrace a short analysis of their contents. This valuable suggestion, after the lapse of twenty years, has been adopted, and the collection of "Calendars of State Papers," now in course of publication, will, when completed, be an absolutely essential aid to those engaged in historical inquiries.

Besides a volume of his "History of Scotland," Tytler published,

in 1837, his "Life of Henry VIII.," which, like his "Life of Raleigh," formed a volume of Oliver and Boyd's "Edinburgh Cabinet Library." It passed through several editions. He also, about this time, in conjunction with Mr John Miller, Q.C., and the Rev. Joseph Stevenson, instituted the English Historical Society. As the Bannatyne Club illustrated Scottish history, this society was originated for the purpose of publishing early chronicles and documents of interest to the student of the literature of England. It flourished for nearly twenty years, and printed for the use of its members a series of twenty-nine volumes, remarkable for the excellence of their typography, and for the care with which they were edited. The labours of Tytler in connexion with this society increased the debt this country owes to his unwearied exertions in the cause of historical research.

As the nature of his literary avocations required constant reference to the manuscript treasures contained in London, Tytler found it expedient to take up his abode in the metropolis; he accordingly removed finally to London in 1837.

Shortly after settling in his new residence in that city Tytler published, in 1839, a work in two volumes, entitled, "England under the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary, with the contemporary History of Europe, illustrated in a Series of Original Letters never before printed." This work contains 191 letters, written by the most distinguished persons of the period, from 1546 to 1558, with introductory remarks, biographical sketches, and useful historical notes. It may be regarded as an attempt to popularise the immense mass of manuscript literature contained in the State Paper Office and other repositories, as the obsolete spelling of the letters was modernised to render them intelligible to general readers. From the multifarious nature of the contents of these volumes, it is difficult to describe them. The work is, however, a favourable specimen of the manner in which a well-skilled antiquary may render generally attractive and interesting those ancient documents which, in their original form, would be seldom consulted.

The publication of the "History of Scotland" was brought to a

close in 1843 by the issue of the ninth and last volume, which Tytler concludes as follows:—"It is with feelings of gratitude, mingled with regret, that the author now closes this work—the history of his country—the labour of little less than eighteen years;—gratitude to the Giver of all good that life and health have been spared to complete, however imperfectly, an arduous undertaking; regret that the tranquil pleasures of historical investigation, the happy hours devoted to the pursuit of truth, are at an end, and that he must at last bid farewell to an old and dear companion."

Tytler has the merit of having executed his great work with much candour and impartiality. On every period of Scottish history which he has examined he has thrown fresh light; and he has given a clear and consistent narrative of events which, in many instances, had previously been the subject of the fiercest controversy. This work, whilst it displays an immense amount of antiquarian knowledge, is, at the same time, replete with elevated sentiments; and is written in that elegant style which might have been expected from its author's hereditary claims to literary distinction.

He begins his history with the accession of Alexander III., in 1242, and continues it to the union of the crowns of England and Scotland under James I., in 1603. The period which he thus assigned to himself is illustrated by reference to nearly every source of authentic information which the recent spirit of antiquarian research had placed at the disposal of the historical inquirer. The voluminous publications of the Record Commission, embracing the Acts of the Scottish Parliament, and the Rotuli Scotiæ, a work relating to the transactions between England and Scotland from 1290 to 1517; the accounts of the Great Chamberlain of Scotland from 1263 to 1435; and the publications of the Bannatyne Club, afforded, in addition to the original MSS. discovered by himself in the national archives, the authentic materials with the aid of which his work was prepared.

The history of Scotland, previous to the reign of Alexander, still remains an interesting field of research; and it may be doubted

whether this part of the subject has yet been so fully explored as to admit of its results being embodied in a history for popular use. The void has been supplied, to a certain extent, by Tytler in his chapter on the state of Ancient Scotland, in which he gives the most graphic account of its early condition anywhere to be found.

In his treatment of what may be called the *quæstiones vexatæ* of Scottish history, it must be said that he rarely allows his own sympathies to influence the impartiality of his narrative. As an instance of this, it may be remarked, that whilst he entertained the greatest respect for the memory of his grandfather—whose vindication of Queen Mary laid the foundation of the literary fame of the family—he came to a different conclusion with reference to Queen Mary, so clearly had his researches established her guilt.

It was at one time Tytler's intention to continue his history down to the period of the union of Scotland with England, in 1707. But from the voluminous and important nature of the documents to be arranged and examined for this purpose he found himself unable to enter on such a herculean task.

A short abstract of his History formed the article "Scotland" in the Seventh Edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica." It first appeared in 1842, and was afterwards printed in a separate form as a suitable class-book for schools.

Tytler at length began to receive the long-delayed rewards of his literary diligence and indefatigable research. A pension of £200 was bestowed on him by Government in recognition of his services. This mark of royal favour was communicated to him in the most handsome terms by Sir Robert Peel, then Prime Minister. He also had the honour of being consulted by Her Majesty and Prince Albert with reference to the collections of historical curiosities, drawings, and miniatures preserved at Windsor. On the occasions of his visiting the palace for this purpose, Tytler was received with much attention, and retained a lively sense of the affability of the royal family. At the desire of Her Majesty he wrote an account of a singular relic in the royal collection, known as the Darnley

Jewel. A few copies of his notes on this subject were printed for Her Majesty's use.

In 1845, Tytler was united, for the second time, in marriage to Anastasia, daughter of Thomson Bonar, Esq., of Camden Place, Kent.

The intense mental application which characterised the whole of Tytler's life, although relieved by an occasional indulgence in active field sports, had, as might be expected, a prejudicial effect on his health. He had a slight paralytic seizure in 1841, from the effects of which, by prompt attention, he recovered. His health, however, broke down in 1846, and he became a confirmed invalid. After residing for some years in Germany for the improvement of his health, he returned to England in 1849, and died in London on Christmas Eve of that year, when he was in the fifty-eighth year of his age. His remains were brought to Edinburgh, and were interred in the family vault, in the Greyfriars' churchyard. He left three children, two sons,—Alexander, and Thomas Patrick, who entered the East India Company's military service,—and one daughter.

The uneventful career of Tytler, thus closed at a comparatively early age, was well worthy of the distinguished family from which he sprung. His high moral character, and his amiable and cheerful disposition, endeared him to a large circle of friends. At the same time he was distinguished, from his youth upwards, by a deep sense of religion—the result of his excellent early training—by which his life was carefully regulated. His numerous published works attest the patient research with which he brought to light historical documents of the highest interest and value; while to his indomitable perseverance in this respect was united an amount of perspicuous discrimination in the employment of them, which justly entitles him to take an honourable place among those authors who have most successfully laid open the historical treasures of their country for the instruction of the present and of future generations.

CONTENTS OF VOL. IV.

CHAP. I.

REGENCY OF MORTON.

1573–1580.

	PAGE
Morton reduces the Borders	1
Killigrew leaves Scotland	1
State of Scotland	2
Grievances of the Kirk	2
Morton's exactions	3
Killigrew's mission into Scotland	4
His interview with James	4
State of the country	5
Killigrew's secret instructions as to Mary	5
He leaves Scotland	6
Walsingham's remonstrances to Elizabeth	6
Killigrew and Davison ordered to proceed to Scotland	7
Affray on the Borders	7
Elizabeth's intemperate message	8
Killigrew arrives in Scotland	8
State of the country	9
Discontent of the Kirk	9
Andrew Melvil	10
Plot of Athole and Argyle against Morton	10
Mission of Randolph to Scotland	11
Success of the plot	12
Morton's resignation of the regency	13
Council of twelve appointed	13
Randolph leaves Scotland	14
Morton's schemes for the recovery of power	14
Morton's coalition with Mar	14
Mar and his friends get possession of the king's person	14
Morton recovers his power	15
Parliament at Stirling	16
Opposition of Lindsay and Montrose	16
Argyle and Athole assemble their forces	17
Bowes reconciles the two factions	17
Unsettled state of the country	18
Intrigues in favour of Mary	19
Destruction of the house of Hamilton	20
Death of the Earl of Athole	21
Meeting of the General Assembly at Edinburgh	22
Esmé Stewart, afterwards Duke of Lennox, arrives in Scotland	22
He becomes the king's favourite	23
Parliament at Edinburgh	23
Poverty of the Crown	24
Reports of attempts to seize the king's person	25
Elizabeth sends Sir R. Bowes into Scotland	26
Lennox professes himself a Protestant	26
The ambassador's interview with James	26
His secret message to the king	27
Bowes leaves Scotland	28

CHAP. II.

JAMES THE SIXTH

1580–1582.

	PAGE
Wavering measures of Elizabeth	28
Lennox's increasing power	29
Alarm of Elizabeth	29
Bowes' mission to Scotland	29
Its failure	29
Lennox resolves to destroy Morton	30
Rise of Captain James Stewart	30
Morton accused of Darnley's murder	31
He is confined in Dumbarton Castle	31
Randolph sent by Elizabeth into Scotland	32
His audience of the king	32
His great efforts to save Morton	32
Intrigues and plots against Lennox	33
Elizabeth encourages them	34
Douglas of Whittingham reveals the whole	35
Randolph retires	35
Morton's trial and condemnation	36
His execution	37
Great power of Lennox	38
He is created a duke	39
Miserable condition of the Queen of Scots	39
Her memorial to Elizabeth	39
Struggle between Episcopacy and Presbyterianism	39
"Second Book of Discipline"	39
Montgomery made Bishop of Glasgow	41
Proceedings of the Kirk against him	41
Mission of Captain Arrington into Scotland	41
The party of the Kirk alarmed by reports from France	41
The ministers admonish the king	42
John Durie's interview with Signor Paul	44
Durie rebukes the king	44
He is ordered to quit the city	44

PAGE

Montgomery excommunicated . . 44
General Assembly 45
Violent debates 45
Durie banished 45
Grievances of the Kirk 46
Boldness of Andrew Melvil . . . 46
Band against Lennox 47
Montgomery driven from Edinburgh . 47
Lennox's obstinacy 48
Raid of Ruthven 48
Conduct of the ministers of the Kirk . 50
Mr James Lawson's sermon 50
Sir George Carey sent into Scotland . 50
Randolph's exultation 50
Lennox's irresolution 51

CHAP. III.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1582-1584.

Durie's triumphant return to Edinburgh 51
Sir George Carey's interview with James 52
The Kirk vindicates the raid of Ruthven 53
Death and character of Buchanan . 53
General Assembly 53
Elizabeth's attempt to recover the letters of Mary to Bothwell . . . 54
Pitiable situation of the king . . 55
Lennox leaves Scotland 55
The ministers send Mr John Colvile to Elizabeth 56
Fowler's disclosures of French intrigues 57
Archibald Douglas betrays Mary's secrets to Walsingham 57
Arrival of Menainville, the French ambassador 58
Alarm of the Kirk 58
Interview of the ministers with James 58
Menainville's boldness 59
The ministers denounce La Motte and Menainville 60
John Colvile and Colonel Stewart sent to Elizabeth 60
Menainville's successful intrigues against the Protestant lords . . 60
The Queen of Scots' letter to Elizabeth 61
Mary's interview with Beal . . . 62
Projected "Association" between Mary and her son in the government . . 62
Elizabeth sounds James on this subject 63
James's aversion to any "Association" 63
Menainville leaves Scotland . . . 64
Colonel Stewart and Colvile's proceedings in England 64
Elizabeth's extreme parsimony . . 65
Death of Lennox in France . . . 65
James deceives Bowes 66
The king escapes from the Ruthven lords 66
Mar and Angus fly 66
The Earl of Arran resumes his power . 66
Raid of Ruthven declared treason . 66
Singular interview between the king and the ministers 67
Walsingham's embassy to Scotland . 68
His interview with James 69
Walsingham's intrigues 69
Discovered and defeated by Arran . 70
Proceedings against the Ruthven lords 70
Flight of Andrew Melvil, ... 71

PAGE

Arrival of the young Duke of Lennox from France 71
Intrigues of Bowes and Walsingham . 71
Discovered and defeated 72
Arran and the king's offers to Elizabeth 73
Elizabeth's difficulties between the two parties 73
Colvile's remonstrances 73
Gowrie seized 74
Flight of Mar and Angus 74
Flight of the ministers to England . 75
Artifice against Gowrie 75
Gowrie's trial 75
His behaviour and execution . . . 76

CHAP. IV.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1584-1586.

Unlimited power of Arran 77
Elizabeth's difficulties 77
Parliament at Edinburgh 78
Mr David Lindsay imprisoned . . . 79
Davison sent to Scotland 79
His conversation with Sir James Melvil 79
Davison's audience of the king . . 80
Davison's picture of the country . . 81
Preponderance of French influence . 82
Elizabeth's anxieties 83
Her crafty policy 84
She appoints Lord Hunsdon to confer with Arran 85
Davison's intrigues with the banished lords 85
Meeting between Hunsdon and Arran . 85
Master of Gray betrays Mary's interests 87
State of opposite factions 88
Sir Edward Hoby and Arran's secret interview 89
Arran's pride and oppression . . . 90
Severity to the Countess of Gowrie . 90
Plot of Arran to assassinate Angus . 91
Persecution of the Kirk 91
Hewison's sermon 92
Mr David Lindsay's vision 92
Master of Gray's embassy to Elizabeth . 93
James's letter to Lord Burghley . . 94
Gray's offers to Elizabeth 94
Intrigues of Elizabeth against Arran . 95
Gray defeats the project of an association between James and Mary . . 96
Persecution of the Kirk 97
Submission of some ministers . . . 97
Arran's violence 97
Sir Edward Wotton sent to Scotland . 97
Intrigues against Arran 98
Proposals for his assassination . . 99
Wotton's embarrassment 99
Lord Russell slain 100
Projected league with England . . 100
Plot of Gray for the return of the Protestant lords 101
Encouraged by Wotton 102
Arran's counterplots 103
Wotton's personal danger, and flight . 105
Gray designs to cut off Arran . . . 106
Enterprise of the Protestant lords . 106
Angus, Mar, and their friends, occupy Stirling 106

PAGE
Interview with James 106
Arran's flight from Stirling . . . 107
Elizabeth sends Sir William Knolles to Scotland 107
Interview with James 107
Randolph's mission 108
Favourably received by James . . 108
League between James and Elizabeth signed 109
Elizabeth's parsimony 110
Terms of the league 110
Elizabeth intercedes for Archibald Douglas 111
Douglas's return and pardon . . 111

CHAP. V.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1586, 1587.

Elizabeth's object in sending Archibald Douglas to Scotland 112
Babington's conspiracy 112
Retrospect of Mary's proceedings . 113
Throckmorton's plot in 1584 . . . 114
Walsingham's system of espionage . 114
Walsingham's tools and assistants . 114
Ballard and Babington's two plots . 115
Mary's design for her escape . . 115
Savage's design to slay Elizabeth . 115
Ballard's introduction to Babington . 116
Six gentlemen resolve to assassinate Elizabeth 117
Mary's letter to Charles Paget . . 117
Progress of the plot 119
Perilous situation of Mary . . . 120
Observations 120
Nau and Curle 120
Letter to Babington 121
Intercepted by Walsingham . . . 121
Mary to Morgan 122
Nau to Babington 123
Phelipps repairs to Chartley . . . 123
Babington's alleged letter to Mary . 125
Curle to Gifford 125
Mary's alleged letter to Babington . 125
Observations 125
Forged postscript 126
Contents of Mary's alleged letter . . 127
Walsingham's mode of proceeding . 128
Babington's suspense and difficulty . 129
Babington's flight 129
Elizabeth informed of the plot . . 130
Her advice to Walsingham . . . 130
Mary carried to Tixall 131
Her papers and letters seized . . 131
Elizabeth's joy 131
Babington and his companions apprehended 131
Elizabeth's fears as to their trials . . 132
Her directions for increasing the pain of the executions 132
Mary brought back to Chartley . . 132
Examinations of Nau and Curle . . 133
Burghley's unfeeling letter . . . 133
Confessions of Nau and Curle . . 134
Commission for Mary's trial . . . 135
Mary's spirited reply on hearing of Elizabeth's resolution 135
Mary refuses to plead 136

PAGE
Elizabeth's letter to Mary . . . 136
Mary consents to appear before the commissioners 137
The commissioners repair to Fotheringay 137
Trial of Mary 137
Mary's answer to the charge . . . 138
Burghley's reply 139
Mary's second answer 140
Mary accuses Walsingham . . . 140
Proceedings of the second day . . 141
She renews her protestation . . . 141
The court adjourns abruptly . . . 142
Burghley's letter to Davison . . . 142
Court meets again at Westminster . 142
Remarks 143
Meeting of Parliament 143
Parliament petition Elizabeth to execute Mary 143
Her reply 143
Mary informed of the sentence . . 144
Paulet's brutal conduct to Mary . . 144
Mary's last letter to Elizabeth . . 145
Henry the Third intercedes for Mary . 146
Elizabeth's violence 146
The King of Scots' efforts to save his mother 146
Embassy of Sir W. Keith . . . 147
Elizabeth's anger 148
Embassy of the Master of Gray and Sir R. Melvil 148
Their interview with Elizabeth . . 148
Ministers of the Kirk refuse to pray for Mary 149
Elizabeth's fears and irresolution . . 150
She signs the warrant for Mary's execution 150
Her instructions to Davison recommending the private assassination of Mary 150
Letter to Sir Amias Paulet . . . 151
Paulet's reply 151
Davison's interview with Elizabeth . 152
The council send off the warrant . . 152
Mary's firmness 152
Her reply on being told to prepare for death 153
Her conduct before her execution . 153
Her parting with Sir Andrew Melvil . 155
Her devotions, and behaviour on the scaffold 156
She is beheaded 158

CHAP. VI.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1586-7-1589.

Elizabeth's conduct on the death of Mary 158
Her great injustice to Davison . . 159
James receives the news of his mother's death 159
Letter of Walsingham to Chancellor Maitland 160
The Borders break loose 161
James's cautious policy 162
Fall of the Master of Gray . . . 162
The king attains majority . . . 162
Reconciliation of the nobility . . 163
Intrigues of Huntly and the Catholics . 164
Difficulties of Elizabeth 164
Lord Hunsdon communicates with James 165

PAGE

James's proceedings against the Catholic lords 166
Destruction of the Spanish armada . 166
James deceived by Elizabeth . . 167
Fowler's character of James . . . 167
Huntly and Errol's intrigues with Rome 168
Their letters intercepted . . . 168
James's vigorous proceedings against them 169
James's negotiations for his marriage with Anne of Denmark . . . 170
The bride sails, but is driven back . 170
The king embarks for Denmark . . 171
Marriage and return of the king . . 172
Coronation fêtes 172

CHAP. VII.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1590-1593.

State of the kingdom 173
Chancellor Maitland and the Earl of Bothwell 174
Maitland's plans for consolidating the king's power 174
Comparative power of the Protestants and Catholics 175
Reforms at court 175
James's activity 176
His embassy to the princes of Germany 176
Embassy to Elizabeth 177
She sends him the garter by the Earl of Worcester 177
Elizabeth's letter to James on the rise of the Puritans 178
Cordiality between Elizabeth and James 179
Chancellor Maitland's letter to Burghley 179
James's activity against the witches . 179
Bothwell accused of plots with the Wizard Graham against the king . 180
Bothwell imprisoned—he escapes . 180
Disorganised state of the kingdom . 182
Bothwell's attack on the palace . . 182
Murder of the "bonny" Earl of Moray by Huntly 183
The Chancellor Maitland driven from court 184
James's difficulties 184
He makes advances to the Kirk . . 185
Presbytery established by Parliament . 185
Intolerance of the Kirk 186
Arrest of Mr George Kerr 187
Discovery of Spanish intrigues . . 187
Intercepted letters of the Catholic lords 187
Huntly and Errol imprisoned . . 188
James's spirited conduct to Bowes . 188
Elizabeth's letter to James 188
James's angry expostulation with Bowes 189
His activity against the Catholic lords . 189
Mission of Lord Burgh to James . . 190
James's leniency to the Catholic lords . 191
He gives audience to Lord Burgh . . 191
The ambassador's intrigues with Bothwell 192
Miserable state of the kingdom . . 192
The Kirk propose the entire extirpation of the Catholics 193

PAGE

James's opposition—deserted by the Kirk 193
Impotence of the laws 194
Reappearance of Captain James Stewart, formerly Earl of Arran . . . 195
The king's vigorous conduct . . . 195
Parliament assembled—Bothwell forfeited 196
Proceedings suspended against Huntly, Errol, and Angus 196
Indignation of the ministers . . . 196
Bothwell seizes the palace, and becomes master of the government . . 197
James's dissimulation 197
Bothwell and Dr Toby Mathews . . 198
Mathews' letter to Burghley 198
Bothwell's letter to Elizabeth . . . 200
Bothwell's trial and acquittal . . . 201
James's unsuccessful attempt to escape 201
He regains his liberty 202

CHAP. VIII.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1593, 1594.

James's resolute conduct 203
Elizabeth courts the Catholics . . . 203
Her duplicity, and letter to James . 204
Bothwell ordered to leave the kingdom 205
Vigour and power of the king, and return of the Chancellor Maitland . 205
James's wise measures 205
Alarm of the Kirk 206
Excommunication of the Catholic lords, and public fast 206
The Catholic lords supplicate to have their trial 208
The Kirk insists on delay 208
They summon the people to meet in arms at Perth 209
Danger of a hostile collision 209
James takes a middle course . . . 210
His severe decree against the Catholics 210
The Kirk complains of his leniency . 211
Elizabeth's letter to James 212
Lord Zouch's (the English ambassador) interview with James 213
Lord Zouch's conspiracies against James 214
Birth of Prince Henry 215
Zouch and Bothwell's plot discovered . 215
Defeated by the king 215
James's letter to Elizabeth 216
James's embassies to foreign states, on the birth of his son 218
His resolution to pursue the Catholic lords 218
Embassy of Sussex to attend the baptism of Prince Henry 218
Letter of Elizabeth to James . . . 218
Baptism of Prince Henry 219
Letter of James to Elizabeth . . . 219
Elizabeth discards Bothwell . . . 220
James's preparations against the Catholics 220
Argyle marches against Huntly . . 221
Besieges Ruthven castle, but repulsed . 222
BATTLE OF GLENLIVAT, ... 223

PAGE
The king attacks and entirely defeats Huntly 225
Commits to the Duke of Lennox the temporary government of the north . 225

CHAP. IX.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1594–1597.

Elizabeth breaks her promise to James 226
His extreme rage and disappointment . 226
Emulation between the Chancellor Maitland and the Earl of Mar . . . 227
Disagreement between the king and queen 228
Commotions in the north 228
Convention of the nobles 230
Miserable state to which Bothwell is reduced 230
Spanish intrigues resumed . . . 230
Errol and Huntly leave Scotland . . 231
James's judicious measures . . . 232
Slaughter of David Forrester . . 232
James's rebuke of the chancellor . . 233
Rivalry of Maitland and Mar . . 233
The king and queen reconciled . . 238
State of the Western Isles . . . 234
Elizabeth's negotiation with Maclean . 235
Power of Maclean 235
Letter of Maclean to Bowes . . . 237
Death of the Chancellor Maitland . 237
Fears of the Kirk at the renewal of Spanish intrigues 238
Appointment of the Octavians . . 239
Sir Robert Bowes sent by Elizabeth to Scotland 239
Bowes's interview with the queen . 240
Bowes's negotiation with Maclean . 241
His observations on James's character 241
Meeting of the General Assembly . 242
Their satisfaction with James's proceedings 242
Seizure of Kinmont Willie . . . 244
Buccleuch carries him off from Carlisle Castle 244
James commits Buccleuch to ward . 245
Huntly returns secretly to Scotland . 246
James anxious for his recantation and restoration to his honours . . . 246
Extreme indignation of the Kirk . . 246
They insist on violent measures . . 247
Mr David Black's attack upon Queen Elizabeth 247
Complaint of the English ambassador . 248
Black's defence 248
James's interview with the commissioners of the Kirk 250
Black found guilty, and banished . . 251
The commissioners of the Kirk ordered to leave the city 251
The king's declaration 251
Twenty-four citizens banished the capital 252
Great tumult in the city 253
The king leaves his capital and retires to Linlithgow 254
The Kirk write to Lord Hamilton . . 254
Mr John Welsh's seditious sermon . 254
PAGE
Lord Hamilton refuses the offers of the Kirk, and gives their letter to the king 255
Vigorous proceedings of the king . . 255
His return to Edinburgh, and submission of the citizens 256
James resolves on the establishment of Episcopacy 256
His "Queries" directed to the Kirk . 257
Answers of the Kirk 258
Meeting of the General Assembly . 258
Success of the king 259
Huntly's recantation, and reconciliation to the Kirk 259
Plot of Barclay of Ladyland to seize "Ailsa" 260
Visitation of St Andrews, and removal of Andrew Melvil 261
Petition by the Kirk to have a voice in parliament 261
Meeting of the General Assembly . 262
Angry debates 262
Agreed that the ministers shall have a voice in parliament 262
Final establishment of Episcopacy in 1600 263

CHAP. X.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1597–98–1600.

State of the country 263
Death of Sir Robert Bowes . . . 264
Mission of Sir William Bowes to Scotland 264
James's anxiety on the subject of his title to the crown of England . . 264
Affair of Valentine Thomas . . . 265
James's complaint against Spenser's "Fairy Queen" 266
Increase of witches, and imposture of Aitken discovered 266
Proposals of Donald Gorm to Queen Elizabeth 267
Maclean slain by Sir James Macdonald . 267
James's schemes for the civilisation of the Isles 268
The Lewis and Skye let to a company of lowland barons 268
Their disasters and failure . . . 269
The magistrates of Edinburgh's spirited resistance to the crown . . . 269
Contest between the king and the Supreme Court 269
Death of Lord Burghley 270
Sir Robert Cecil manages the Scottish affairs 270
His alarms for James's orthodoxy . . 270
James's financial embarrassments . 271
Mission of Sir William Bowes . . 272
"Basilicon Doron" 272
Andrew Melvil attacks it 272
Publication of the king's book . . 272
A general fast 273
Sir Edmund Ashfield kidnapped . . 273
James's indignation 273
Arrival of a French ambassador . . 274

PAGE
Alarm of the Kirk at the arrival of "English Players" 274
General "band" on the succession . 275
James's harangue on the same subject 275
His scheme of taxation defeated . . 275
Spirited resistance of the burghs . . 275
First day of the year altered from 25th March to 1st January . . . 276

CHAP. XI.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1600.

The Gowrie conspiracy 276
Early life of the young Earl of Gowrie . 277
Education at Padua 277
His stay at Paris 278
His reception at the English court . 278
Coldness between Elizabeth and James 278
Bothwell reported to be in Scotland . 279
Reflections on the state of parties . 279
Gowrie's return to Scotland . . . 280
Anecdotes 280
He retires from court 282
Convention of estates, and debates . 282
Gowrie opposes the king 283
James's rage at Gowrie and the burghs 283
Remarks 284
Gowrie's plot and accomplices . . . 284
He studies Machiavel 285
Logan of Restalrig and Laird Bower . 285
The Master of Ruthven 285
Gowrie House and Fastcastle . . 286
Letter of Logan to the unknown conspirator, 18th July 287
Logan to Laird Bower 287
Logan to the unknown conspirator, 27th July 288
Logan to Gowrie, July 29 288
Logan to the unknown conspirator . 290
Summary of the letters 290
Progress of the plot 291
The king arrives at Gowrie House . 293
Progress of the plot 293
James follows the Master of Ruthven to the private room 294
The struggle between them 294
The catastrophe. Death of the Master and Gowrie 295
Popular tumult 296
James returns to Falkland 297
Rejoicings when he returns to Edinburgh 297

CHAP. XII.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1600–1603.

PAGE
Scepticism of the Kirk on the Gowrie conspiracy 297
James's impatience and impolitic conduct 297
Severe proceedings against the House of Ruthven 298
Elizabeth's letter to James 298
Ashfield's directions to James as to the "succession" 299
Differences between the king and his queen 300
Birth of a prince, afterwards Charles the First 300
Friendly letter of Elizabeth to James . 300
James interests himself for the Earl of Essex 301
Embassy of the Earl of Mar and the Abbot of Kinloss to Elizabeth . . 301
Elizabeth's cold reception of them . 302
James's secret instructions to the ambassadors 303
The ambassadors gain Secretary Cecil . 304
Elizabeth's letter to James 304
Last parliament of Elizabeth 305
The queen abolishes monopolies . . 305
Mission of the Duke of Lennox to Elizabeth 306
The duke's secret negotiations in England 306
Cecil and Howard's secret correspondence with James 307
James's wise and spirited conduct . 308
His difficulties in conciliating the Catholics 308
Former mission of Pourie Ogilvy . . 309
James's alleged letter to the Pope . 309
Difficulty in discovering the truth as to these intrigues 310
All parties favour his title 310
Reconciliations and stanching of feuds amongst the Scottish nobles . . 310
Elizabeth's last letter to James . . 311
Elizabeth's last illness 312
Her death 314
James proclaimed her successor . . 314
Sir Robert Carey's journey to Scotland . 314
James sets out for England 315
His triumphant progress 315
He enters London, and takes possession of the English throne 315
Conclusion of the history 316

PROOFS AND ILLUSTRATIONS . . . 317

HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.

HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.

CHAPTER I.

REGENCY OF MORTON.

1573—1580.

SCOTLAND was now at peace; and the regent, having nothing to fear from domestic enemies or foreign intrigue, addressed himself with great energy and success to reduce the country to order. The Border districts, at all times impatient under the restraints of a firm government, had, during the late civil commotions, become the scene of the utmost violence and confusion; but Morton, advancing from Peebles to Jedburgh with a force of four thousand men, soon compelled the principal chiefs to respect the law and give pledges for their obedience.[1] Sir James Hume of Coldingknowes was then appointed warden of the east, Lord Maxwell of the west, and Sir John Carmichael of the middle marches;[2] and the regent had leisure to renew his correspondence and confirm his ties with England.

Some time before this, when Killigrew, after his successful embassy, returned to the English court,[3] Morton had sent a memorial to Elizabeth,[4] in which he pointed out the principles upon which he proposed to regulate his future government. He declared the grateful feelings entertained by himself and the people, for her late assistance in quieting their troubled country, and reducing it under the king's obedience.[5] He urged the necessity of entering into a mutual league for the maintenance of the Protestant religion, and its professors, against the Council of Trent; and suggested the expediency of a contract or band for mutual defence from foreign invasion.[6] In a letter written at the same time to Burghley, he pointed out the heavy charges which he had incurred, and requested pecuniary assistance, as it would still be necessary for him to provide against any renewed rebellion by keeping up a body of troops; and he, lastly, reminded Elizabeth that Mary, the root of all the evil, was still in her power, and at her disposal. "The ground of the trouble," said he, "remains in her majesty's hands and power; whereunto I doubt not her highness will put

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, the Regent to Lord Burghley, Kelso, August 30, 1573.

[2] Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland, p. 337. Spottiswood, p. 272.

[3] June 29.

[4] Copy, State-paper Office, Memoirs of me, the Lord Regent of Scotland, to the Queen's Majesty of England's Ambassador, &c., June 26, 1573.

[5] Ibid. [6] Ibid.

order when she thinks time, so as presently I will not be further curious thereanent, abiding the knowledge of her majesty's mind, how she shall think convenient to proceed in that behalf."[1] It appears from this sentence, that the regent invited the English queen to renew the negotiations for putting Mary to death in Scotland, which were so suddenly broken off by the decease of Mar; and indeed, some time before the surrender of the castle of Edinburgh, Killigrew the ambassador wrote to Burghley, that he had given Morton a strong hint upon the subject. He stated, that in a conversation which took place in the palace, the regent had declared, that as long as the Scottish queen lived, there would be treason, troubles, and mischief: "to which," said Killigrew, "I answered he might help that; and he said, when all was done, he thought at the next parliament . . . to prove the noblemen after this concord, to see what might be done."[2] We do not find, however, that Elizabeth at this moment gave any encouragement to the renewal of this nefarious negotiation.

All was now quiet in Scotland; and it is remarkable that, notwithstanding the miseries of the civil war, the general prosperity of the country had been progressive. Commerce and trade had increased; and whilst the power of the high feudal lords was visibly on the decay, the middle classes had risen in importance; and the great body of the people, instructed in their political duties by the sermons of the clergy, and acquiring from the institution of parish schools a larger share of education and intelligence, began to appreciate their rights, and to feel their own strength. There is a passage in a letter of Killigrew, which is worthy of notice upon this subject. "Methinks," said this acute observer, "I see the noblemen's great credit decay in this country, and the barons, burrows, and suchlike take more upon them; the ministers and religion increase, and the desire in them to prevent the practices of the Papists; the number of able men for service very great, and well furnished both on horse and foot; their navy so augmented, as it is a thing almost incredible."[3] It is to be recollected that Killigrew's last visit to Scotland had been in 1567, immediately after the murder of the king; and that the remarkable change which he now noticed, had taken place in the brief period of five years.

This flourishing state of things, however, did not long continue; for although the regent was justly entitled to the praise of restoring security and order, and his vigour in the punishment of crime, and the maintenance of the authority of the laws, was superior to that of any former governor, there was one vice which stained his character, and led to measures of an unpopular and oppressive kind. This was avarice: and he found the first field for its exercise in an attack upon the patrimony of the Kirk. He had the address to persuade the Presbyterian clergy, that it would be the best thing for their interests to resign at once into his hands the thirds of the benefices, which had been granted for their support by a former parliament. Their collectors, he said, were often in arrear; but his object would be to make the stipend local, and payable in each parish where they served. This would be a better system; and if it failed, they should, upon application, be immediately reinstated in their right and possession.[4] The plan was agreed to, but was followed by immediate repentance on the part of the clergy; as the moment Morton became possessed of the thirds, his scheme of spoliation was unmasked. The course he followed was, to appoint two, three, or even four churches to one minister, who was bound to preach in them by turns; and at the same

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Morton to Burghley, June 25, 1573.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, the Regent to Lord Burghley, Holyrood, June 26, 1573. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, March 4, 1572-3.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, Nov. 11, 1572.

[4] Spottiswood, p. 273.

time he placed in every parish a reader, whose duty was to officiate in the minister's absence, and to whom a miserable pittance of twenty or forty pounds Scots was assigned. Having thus allotted to the Church the smallest possible sum, he seized the overplus for himself; and when the clergy, sensible of their error, petitioned to be reinstated in their property, as had been promised, they were at first met with delays, and at last peremptorily told, that the appointment of the stipends ought properly to belong to the regent and council.

Nothing could be more distressing and degrading to this independent body of men than such a state of things. Before this, when their stipend was defective, they had an appeal to the superintendents, who, if not always able, were at least solicitous to relieve them. Now, they were compelled to become suitors at court, where their importunate complaints met only with ridicule and neglect. All this misery was justly laid to the regent's account; and although once their favourite, as a steady friend to the Reformation, he became highly unpopular with the clergy.

But if the grasping avarice of Morton fell heavy on the ministers of the Kirk, their woes were little to the miseries of the lower classes, more especially the artisans, merchants, and burgesses of the capital. Many of these had remained in the city during the time of the late troubles. These were now treated as rebels, who had resisted the king's authority; and they found that they must either submit to a public trial, or purchase security by payment of a heavy fine. The sum thus collected was intended at first to be divided between the state and the citizens whose houses and property had been destroyed; but it followed the fate of all moneys paid into the coffers of this rapacious governor.

Another source of complaint arose out of those itinerant courts, denominated Justice-Ayres, and held in different parts of the kingdom; which, under his administration, became little else than parts of a system of legal machinery, invented to overawe and plunder all classes in the country. To supply them with victims, he kept in pay a numerous body of informers, whose business it was to discover offences. Nor was it difficult to bring forward accusations of almost every possible nature, after so many years of a divided government, in which men, at one time or another, had been compelled to acknowledge very opposite authorities; now that of the king and his regent, now that of the queen or her partisans. Ample ground was thus found for every species of prosecution: against merchants for transporting coin out of the realm, against Protestants for transgressing the statute by eating flesh in Lent, against the poorer artisans or labourers for the mere remaining in a town or city which was occupied by the queen's forces. As to those whose only offence was to be rich, their case was the worst of all; for to have a full purse, and "thole"[1] a heavy fine to the regent, were become synonymous terms.

These were not Morton's only resources. His petitions to Elizabeth for support were importunate and incessant; nor did he fail to remind her, that as it was by her allowance and advice that he had entered upon the regency, so he confidently expected her aid, especially in money, and pensions bestowed upon his friends. Although universally reputed rich, he dwelt pathetically on his limited revenue compared with his vast outlay; and in the letter to Burghley, which preferred these requests, he at the same time earnestly recommended Elizabeth to keep a watchful eye upon France, as the noted Adam Gordon, who had already done so much mischief in the north, was now received at the French court, and had offered, if properly supported, to overthrow the king's government in Scotland.[2]

This news seems to have alarmed the English queen; for, not long after,

1 "Thole," undergo.

2 MS. Letter, State-paper Office, the Regent Morton to Burghley, Jan. 21, 1573-4, Haddington.

she again despatched Killigrew into that country. Her avowed object was to learn the state of public feeling, and the disposition of the regent; "whether he was constant in his affection towards England; how his government was liked by the people; whether the Scottish queen had yet any party there; and, above all, to discover whether France was intriguing, as had been reported, to get possession of the young king." To the regent's proposal for a defensive and religious league, he was instructed to reply that she deemed such a measure at present unnecessary; although, in any emergency, he might look confidently to her support. As to his request for money, Killigrew was, as delicately as he could, to "waive" all discussion upon the subject.

Here, however, as in the former embassy, there was a mission within a mission; and the envoy's open instructions embraced not the whole, nor even the most material part of the object for which he was sent. He was enjoined by Burghley and Leicester (doubtless, as before, with Elizabeth's knowledge and advice) to renew the negotiation for the "great matter," the project for having Mary put to death in her own country, and by her own subjects. Unfortunately the written orders upon this point are now lost; but immediately upon his arrival in Edinburgh, the ambassador communicated to Walsingham his fears that they had suffered the time for the accomplishment of so desirable a result to go by.[1]

On examining the state of the country, Killigrew became convinced that his sovereign and the English had lost popularity since his late residence in Scotland. The regent, although professing his usual devotion, appeared more distant and reserved. The queen's coldness on the subject of the proposed league, and her evasion of his requests for pensions, had produced no good effect; and some piracies committed by English subjects upon Scottish merchantmen, had occasioned great popular discontent.

Not long after the ambassador's arrival, he repaired to Stirling, where he was introduced to the young king, who had very recently completed his eighth year; and, after the interview, he sent this interesting portrait of him to Walsingham:—"Since my last unto you," said he, "I have been at Stirling to visit the king in her majesty's name, and met by the way the Countess of Mar coming to Edinburgh, to whom I did her majesty's commendations.

"The king seemed to be very glad to hear from her majesty, and could use pretty speeches: as, how much he was bound unto her majesty, yea, more than to his own mother. And at my departure, he prayed me to thank her majesty for the good remembrance she had of him; and further desired me to make his hearty commendations unto her majesty. His grace is well grown, both in body and spirit, since I was last here. He speaketh the French tongue marvellous well; and that which seems strange to me, he was able, *extempore*, (which he did before me,) to read a chapter of the Bible out of Latin into French, and out of French after into English, so well as few men could have added anything to his translation. His schoolmasters, Mr George Buchanan and Mr Peter Young, rare men, caused me to appoint the king what chapter I would; and so did I, whereby I perceived it was not studied for. They also made his highness dance before me, which he likewise did with a very good grace; a prince sure of great hope, if God send him life."[2]

The English ambassador remained in Scotland for more than two months, during which time he had ample opportunities to make himself acquainted with the state of the country. He found the regent firm in his government, universally obeyed,

[1] MS., State-paper Office, "Instructions given to Henry Killigrew, Esq.," &c., May 22, 1574, signed by Walsingham. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, June 8, 1574, Berwick.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, June 30, 1574.

somewhat more feared than loved; but bold, decisive, and clear-headed in the adoption and execution of such measures as he deemed necessary to establish quiet and good order in the realm.

The general prosperity of all classes of the people surprised him. He had, to use his own expression, left the country "in a consumption," distracted and impoverished by a long continuance of civil war.[1] He had expected, on his return, to meet with the same melancholy state of things; but to his astonishment, the nation, as he described it to Burghley and Walsingham, had recovered itself with a rapidity of which he found it difficult to assign the cause. Its commerce and manufactures were in a flourishing condition, the people seemed to have forgotten their miseries, the nobles were reconciled to each other, and universally acknowledged the king's authority. Although French intrigue was still busy, and the captive queen attempted to keep up a party, the uncommon vigilance of Morton detected and put down all her practices. Formerly, the people, broken, bankrupt, and dispirited, were glad to sue for the protection of England, and the nobles were eager in their offers to Elizabeth. Now, to use Killigrew's phrase, they were "lusty and independent;" they talked as those who would be sued to; their alliance, they said, had been courted by "great monarchies;" and they complained loudly of the attack and plunder of their merchantmen by the English pirates. On this subject the regent expressed himself keenly, and was greatly moved. He dwelt, too, on other causes of dissatisfaction. The rejection of the proposed league by Elizabeth; her silence as to sending him any aid, or granting any pensions; the delay in giving back the ordnance which had been taken by the English, and other lighter subjects of complaint, were all recapitulated; and it was evident to Killigrew that there was an alteration in the relative position of the two countries, which he assured Walsingham would not be removed by mere words of compliment.[2]

The ambassador anxiously impressed upon Elizabeth and her ministers, that the Scots were no longer dependent upon England; and as to attempting to make any impression upon the regent in "the great matter,"[3] which Leicester and Burghley were solicitous should be again secretly discussed, it seemed to him a vain idea at present. If Morton were to consent to put Mary to death on her delivery into his hands, it would only be, as he soon perceived, by the offer of a far higher bribe than Elizabeth was disposed to give; and by the settlement of large annuities on such of the nobles as were confidants to his cruel design. Killigrew was so assured of the backwardness of his royal mistress upon this point, and the determination of the regent not to move without such inducement, that he begged to be allowed to return. "I see no cause," said he to Walsingham, "why I should remain here any longer; . . . . especially if you resolve not upon the league, nor upon pensions, which is the surest ground I do see to build 'the great matter' upon, without which small assurance can be made. I pray God we prove not herein like those who refused the three volumes of Sibylla's prophecies, with the price which afterwards they were glad to give for one that was lost; for sure I left the market here better cheap than now I find it."[4]

The Queen of England, however, was not to be so easily diverted from any object upon which she considered the safety of herself and her kingdom to depend, and she insisted that her

[1] This must allude to his last visit but one—*i.e.*, in 1567; for in 1572 he described it as rapidly improving. Supra, p. 2.

[2] MS. Letter, State paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, June 23, 1574. Ibid., same to same, June 24, 1574. Ibid., 18th June 1574.

[3] The having Mary put to death in Scotland.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, July 12, 1574, Edinburgh. Ibid., June 23, 1574.

ambassador should remain and accompany the regent in his northern progress, upon which he was about to enter.[1] "I think it not convenient," said Walsingham to him in a letter of the 18th July, "that you be recalled till such time as you have advertised how you find the regent affected touching 'the great matter' you had in commission to deal in; and therefore I think fit you accompany the regent till you be revoked."[2]

In the meantime, Elizabeth held a secret conference with Leicester, Burghley, and Walsingham, and appears to have herself suggested a new scheme for getting rid of Mary. It is unfortunately involved in much obscurity, owing to the letter in which it is alluded to being written partly in cipher; but it was disapproved of by Walsingham, apparently on the ground that it would be dangerous to send the Scottish queen into Scotland without an absolute certainty that she should be put to death.[3]

The English queen was evidently distracted between the fear of two dangers,—one, the retaining Mary within her dominions, which experience had taught her was the cause of constant plots and practices; the other, the delivering her to the Scots, an expedient which, unless it were carried through in the way proposed by Burghley and Leicester in 1572,[4]—that is, under a positive agreement that she should be put to death,—was, as they justly thought, full of peril. Morton, however, although he had shewn himself perfectly willing to receive Mary under this atrocious condition, continued firm in his resolution not to sell his services for mere words. He, too, insisted on certain terms; especially an advance in money, and pensions to his friends. But the queen deemed his demands exorbitant; and, as was not unfrequent with her when pressed by a difficulty from which she saw no immediate escape, she dismissed the subject from her mind, and unwisely took refuge in delay. In this manner "the great matter" for the present was allowed to sleep; and Mary owed her life to the parsimony of Elizabeth, and the avarice of the Scottish regent.[5]

Killigrew not long after left Scotland, and on parting with him, Morton assured Leicester, in a letter which this ambassador carried with him, "that no stranger had ever departed from that country with greater liking and contentment of the people."[6] He requested him at the same time, on his return to the English court, to communicate with the queen and council upon some subjects of import which required a speedy answer. These embraced the dangers to which the Protestant interest in Scotland was exposed from continental intrigue; but, to the regent's mortification, many months elapsed before any answer was received. At last Walsingham, alarmed by the apathy of Elizabeth and the continued practices of her enemies, endeavoured, in a letter of free remonstrance, to rouse his mistress to a sense of her peril. He told her that he had recently received a despatch from the Scottish regent, and with it some intercepted papers of the Bishop of Ross, which required instant consideration. They would convince her, he trusted, how utterly hollow were the promises of France and Spain, and to what imminent danger

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, June 23, 1574.

[2] Ibid., draft, Walsingham to Killigrew, July 18, 1574.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Killigrew, Woodstock, July 30, 1574. Killigrew accordingly accompanied the regent in his northern progress, and, on their arrival at Aberdeen, held a secret consultation on *the great matter;* but, unfortunately, the letters in which we might have looked for a particular account of what took place have disappeared. All that we know with certainty is, that the ambassador returned soon after to the English court, (Aug. 16;) and that in a brief memorandum of such things as the regent desired him to remember in his conferences with the Queen of England, is this slight note:—"What further is to be looked for in that which passed betwixt us at Aberdeen, touching *the matter of greatest moment.*"—MS. Memorandum, State-paper Office, August 16, 1574.

[4] Supra, vol. iii. pp. 349, 351.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, the Regent to Leicester, August 16, 1574, Aberdeen.

[6] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Morton to Leicester, August 16, 1574.

she was exposed from "unsound subjects at home." He besought her deeply to weigh the matter, and "set to" her hand for the protection of her realm; observed that, though the Cardinal of Lorraine were dead, he had left successors enough to execute his plots; and conjured her to use expedition, before the hidden sparks of treason, now smouldering within the realm, should break out into an unquenchable fire. "For the love of God, madam," said he, "let not the case of your diseased estate hang longer in deliberation. Diseased estates are no more cured by consultation without execution, than unsound bodies by mere conference with the physician; and you will perceive by his letters how much the regent is aggrieved."[1]

For a moment these strong representations alarmed Elizabeth, and she talked of sending Killigrew or Randolph immediately into Scotland;[2] but her relations with France occasioned new delays. She had entered into an amicable correspondence with Catherine de Medicis; the Duke d'Alençon still warmly prosecuted his marriage suit; and although the English queen had not the slightest intentions of granting it, she, as usual, dallied and coquetted with the proposal. In the midst of all, Charles the Ninth died; the queen became engrossed with the speculations and uncertainties which follow a new succession; and Morton, irritated by neglect, was driven by resentment and necessity to cultivate the friendship of that party in Scotland which was devoted to France.

This alienation was soon detected by Walsingham, who wrote in alarm to Burghley, and on the succeeding day to Elizabeth, adjuring her, for the love of God, to arrest the impending mischief, and secure the Scottish amity, which of all others stood them at that moment in greatest stead. Already, he said, the regent was conferring favours on the Hamiltons, who were entirely French; already he was plotting to get the young King of Scots out of the hands of his governor, Alexander Erskine: Henry the Third, the new King of France, was well known to be devoted to the house of Guise; and with such feelings, what was to be expected but that, the moment he had quieted the disturbances in his own realm, he would keenly embrace the cause of the Scottish queen?[3]

Elizabeth was at last roused, and gave orders for the despatch of Henry Killigrew into Scotland, accompanied by Mr Davison, afterwards the celebrated secretary, whom he was directed to leave as English resident at the Scottish court.[4] But before the ambassador crossed the Border, an affray broke out, which threatened the most serious consequences, and arrested him at Berwick. At a warden court, held by Sir John Forster, warden of the middle marches, and Sir John Carmichael, keeper of Liddesdale, a dispute arose which led to high words between these two leaders; and their followers, taking fire, assaulted each other. The Scots at first were repulsed, but being joined by a body of their countrymen from Jedburgh, rallied, and attacked, and totally routed the English. Sir John Heron, keeper of Tynedale, was slain: whilst Sir John Forster, Sir Francis Russell, Sir Cuthbert Collingwood, Mr Ogle, Mr Fenwick, and about three hundred men, were made prisoners, and carried by the Earl of Angus to the regent at Dalkeith. Morton received them with much courtesy, dismissed the prisoners of inferior rank, and expressed, in a letter to Elizabeth, his readiness to

[1] MS. Letter, draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Elizabeth, January 15, 1574-5.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Edward Cary to Walsingham, January 17, 1574-5. Also original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to the Queen, March 20, 1574-5. In the midst of these anticipated troubles, died, at his palace of Hamilton, the Duke of Chastelherault, better known by the name of the Regent Arran, on the 22d January 1574-5.

[3] MS. Letter, original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, April 11, 1575. Also State-paper Office, original draft, Walsingham to Elizabeth, April 12, 1575.

[4] MS., State-paper Office, original, instructions to Henry Killigrew, May 27, 1575.

afford redress: but he detained the lord warden; and when the queen insisted that the regent should meet Lord Huntingdon, the president of the north, in a personal conference in England, he peremptorily refused. Such a proceeding, he said, was beneath the dignity of the office he held; but he offered to send the justice-clerk to arrange a meeting in Scotland.[1]

On being informed of this, Elizabeth, already chafed by the detention of her warden, broke into one of those furious fits of passion which sometimes caused her highest councillors to tremble for their heads, and disagreeably reminded them of her father. In this frame she dictated a violent message to the Scottish regent, which she commanded Killigrew to deliver without reserve or delay. She had seen, she said, certain demands made, on his part, by the justice-clerk, and did not a little wonder at so strange and insolent a manner of dealing. He had already been guilty of a foul fact in detaining her warden, the governor of one of the principal forts in her realm: he had committed a flagrant breach of treaty; and had she been inclined to prosecute her just revenge, he should soon have learnt what it was for one of his base calling to offend one of her quality. And whereas, continued she, he goeth about to excuse the detaining of our warden, alleging that he feared he might revenge himself when his blood was roused for his kinsman's death,—such an excuse seemed to her, she must tell him, a scornful aggravation of his fault; for she would have him to know, that neither Forster nor any other public officer or private subject of hers dared to offer such an outrage to her government, as, for private revenge, to break a public treaty. As to the conference with Huntingdon, instead of receiving her offer with gratitude, he had treated it with contempt. He had taken upon him to propose a place of meeting, four miles within Scotland; an ambitious part in him, and savouring so much of an insolent desire of sovereignty, that she would have scorned such a request had it come from the king his master, or the greatest prince in Europe. To conclude, she informed him that, if he chose to confer with the Earl of Huntingdon at the *Bond Rode*,[2] she was content; and he would do well to remember that his predecessor, the Regent Moray, had not scrupled to come to York, and afterwards to London, to hold a consultation with her commissioners.[3]

This passionate invective I have given, as it is highly characteristic of the queen; but Huntingdon and Killigrew deemed it proper to soften its expressions, in conveying the substance of it to the regent, whom they had no mind unnecessarily to irritate.[4] Even in its diluted state, however, it awed him into submission. He met the English president on the 16th of August at the appointed place, arranged all differences, and not only dismissed his prisoners, but loaded them with presents, and sent Carmichael up to England to ask pardon of Elizabeth. Amongst his gifts were some choice falcons; upon which a saying rose amongst the Borderers, alluding to the death of Sir John Heron, that for this once the regent had lost by his bargain: "He had given live hawks for dead Herons."[5]

The quarrel having been adjusted, Killigrew proceeded to Scotland. On his arrival there, he perceived everywhere indications of the same flourishing condition in which he had lately left the country. Whilst the people seemed earnestly disposed to preserve the amity with England, all lamented

[1] MS. Relation of the Affairs of Scotland from 1566 to 1579. Warrender MS. Collections, vol. B. fol. 208.

[2] The *Bond Rode*, or boundary road, a place or road on the marches near Berwick, common to both kingdoms.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, to Killigrew in Scotland. From the Queen.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Leicester, August 14, 1575.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Huntingdon to Leicester, August 14, 1575. Ibid., MS. Letter, Huntingdon to Sir T. Smith, August 17, 1575. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, the Regent to Walsingham, Sept. 20, 1575; and Hume of Godscroft, vol. ii. p. 253.

the late accident on the Borders; and the ministers in their sermons prayed fervently for the continuance of the peace. As to the regent himself, the ambassador found him still firm in his affection to England, and in resisting the advances of France. Although not popular, generally, the vigour and success of his government were admitted even by his enemies: property and person were secure, except from the rapacity of the regent himself, and he gave an example of confidence in his own conduct; for he never used a guard, and would pursue his diversions, walking abroad with his fishing-rod over his shoulder, or his hawk on his wrist,[1] almost alone, to the wonder of many. The Borders, since the late disturbance, had been quiet; and so rapidly had the foreign commerce of the country increased, that Killigrew reckoned it able to raise twenty thousand mariners.[2]

Such was the favourable side of the picture; but there were some drawbacks to this prosperity, arising chiefly out of the feuds amongst the nobility, and the discontent of the clergy. It was reported that Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, who had shot the Regent Moray, and fled to the continent after the murder, was to be brought home by the Lord of Arbroath. Arbroath was second son of the late Duke of Chastelherault, and, owing to the insanity of Arran, his elder brother, had become the chief leader of the Hamiltons. The idea of the return of the late regent's murderer, roused his friends to the highest pitch of resentment; and Douglas of Lochleven, Moray's near kinsman, assembling a force of twelve hundred men, vowed deadly vengeance against both the assassin and Arbroath his chief. The Earls of Argyle, Athole, Buchan, and Mar, with Lords Lindsay and Ruthven, espoused the quarrel of Lochleven: Arbroath, on the other hand, would be supported, it was said, by all the friends of France and the queen; whilst Morton in vain endeavoured to bring both parties to respect the laws. Arbroath, too, meditated a marriage with the Lady Buccleuch, sister to the Earl of Angus, the regent's nephew and heir; and when Morton appeared to countenance the match, a clamour arose amongst the young king's friends, that he shewed an utter disregard to the safety of his sovereign. Was not the duke, they said, failing the king, the next heir to the throne? was not Arran, that nobleman's eldest son, mad? and did not the right of the royal succession devolve on Arbroath? Had the regent forgotten the ambition of the house of Hamilton, and Arbroath's familiarity with blood? and would he strengthen the hands of such a man by a marriage in his own family? If so, he need not look for the support of any faithful subject who tendered the young king's preservation.[3]

To these were added other causes of disquiet and difficulty. Morton was no longer popular with the citizens of Edinburgh; nor, indeed, could he reckon upon the support of any of the middle or lower classes in the state. His exactions had completely disgusted the merchants of the capital. He had imprisoned the most opulent amongst them; and this caused so great an outcry, that many scrupled not to say that, if he did not speedily change his measures, the same burghers' hands which had put him up would as surely pull him down again. To all these causes of discontent, must be added his quarrel with the Kirk, and the soreness arising out of his recent establishment of Episcopacy. This had given mortal offence to some of the leading ministers, who considered the appointment of bishops, abbots, and other Roman Catholic dignitaries, to be an unchristian and heterodox practice, utterly at variance with the great principles of their Reformation. They arraigned, and with justice as far as regarded the regent, the selfish and venal feelings which had led to the preservation of this alleged relic of Popery. It was evident, they said, that avarice, and not religion, was at

[1] Murdin, p. 283.

[2] This is the number stated in Killigrew's paper; but he must have made a highly erroneous and exaggerated calculation. Murdin, p. 285.

[3] Murdin, pp. 282, 283.

the root of the whole. The nobles and the laity had already seized a large portion of the Church lands, and their greedy eyes still coveted more. These prizes they were determined to retain; whilst the poor ministers who laboured in the vineyard, and to whom the thirds of the benefices had been assigned, found this a nominal provision, and were unable, with their utmost efforts, to extract a pittance from the collectors; the whole of the rents finding their way into the purses of the regent and his favourites. And how utterly ridiculous was this last settlement of the bishops? Was it not notorious, that the see attached to the primacy of St Andrews belonged, in reality, to Morton himself? that there was a secret agreement, a nefarious collusion, between him and the prelate, his own near relative, whom he had placed in it? Was it not easy to see that the chief purpose of this ecclesiastical office was to enable the regent more readily and decently to suck out the riches of the benefice, as, in the north country, farmers would sometimes stuff a calf's skin, called there a *tulchan*, and set it up before a cow to make her give her milk more willingly? What were all these bishops, and abbots, and priors, whom they now heard so much about, but mere *tulchans*,—men of straw, clerical calves,—set up by the nobility to facilitate their own simoniacal operations?

These arguments, which were enforced with much popular eloquence and humour by those ministers who were attached to the Presbyterian form of church government, produced a great effect upon the people, already sufficiently disgusted by the exactions and tyranny of the regent. Morton, too, increased the discontent by his violence, threatening the most zealous of the ministers, and broadly declaring his conviction that there would be no peace or order in the country till some of them were hanged.[1]

At this crisis, Andrew Melvil, a Scottish scholar of good family, who had been educated first in his native country, and afterwards brought up in the strictest principles of Calvin and Beza at Geneva, returned to Scotland from the continent. He was profoundly skilled in the Greek and Latin languages, and calculated, both by his learning and enthusiasm, to be of essential service to the reviving literature of his country; but he was rash and imperious, a keen republican, sarcastic and severe in his judgment of others, and with little command of temper. Soon after his arrival he acquired a great influence over Durie, one of the leading ministers of the Kirk, who, at his instigation, began to agitate the question, whether the office of a bishop was consistent with the true principles of church government, as they could be gathered from the Word of God? After various arguments and consultations held upon the subject, a form of church polity was drawn up by some of the leading ministers; and the regent, with greater indulgence than his former proceedings had promised, appointed some members of the council to take it into consideration; but they had scarcely met, when the state was suddenly plunged into new troubles, which at once broke off their conference.

This revolution originated in a coalition of the Earls of Athole and Argyle against the regent. Both these noblemen were of great power and possessions, and could command nearly the whole of the north of Scotland. Athole, a Stewart, was considered the leader of that party which had recently attached themselves to the young king, under the hope of prevailing upon him to assume the government in his own person. Being a Roman Catholic, he was, for this reason, much suspected by Morton; and he, in his turn, hated the regent for his cruel conduct to Lethington, to whom Athole had been linked in the closest friendship. Argyle, on the other hand, although he had formerly been united with Morton in most of his projects, was now completely estranged from his old comrade; and the cause of quarrel was to be traced to the

[1] Calderwood, MS. Hist., British Museum, Ayscough's Catalogue, No. 4735, p. 1053 of the MS.

regent's cupidity. Argyle had married the widow of the Regent Moray, Agnes Keith, a sister of the Earl Marshal, and through her had got possession of some of the richest of the queen's jewels. These Mary had delivered to Moray in a moment of misplaced confidence. He, as was asserted, had advanced money upon them to the state; at his death they remained in the hands of his widow; and Morton now insisted on recovering them, in obedience to an order given on the subject by parliament. Argyle and his lady resisted; and although the jewels were at last surrendered, it was not till the noble persons who detained them were threatened with arrest. This, and other causes of dispute, had entirely alienated Argyle from Morton: but, for a short season, the regent derived security from the sanguinary contests between the two northern earls themselves. Their private warfare, however, which had threatened to involve in broils and bloodshed the whole of the north, was suddenly composed; and by one of those rapid changes which were by no means unfrequent in feudal Scotland, the two fierce rivals, instead of destroying each other, united in a league against the regent. This new state of things is to be traced to the influence of Alexander Erskine, the governor of the king and commander of Stirling castle. This gentleman had recently discovered that Morton, with that subtle and treacherous policy of which he had already given many proofs, was secretly plotting to get possession of the person of the young monarch, and to place a creature of his own in command of the castle of Stirling. To confound his scheme, Erskine, who was beloved by the higher nobles, and a principal member of the confederacy which had been formed for the king's protection, wrote secretly to Athole and Argyle, inviting them to come to Stirling, assuring them that James was already well disposed to redress their complaints against the regent, and promising them immediate access to the royal person.

It is scarcely to be believed that these plots and jealousies should have altogether escaped the attention of Morton. He had his secret emissaries both in Scotland and in England, and he must have been well aware of his increasing unpopularity. The age of the young king, who had now entered on his twelfth year, and begun to take an interest in the government, admonished him that every succeeding year would render it a more difficult task for any regent to engross the supreme power; and as long as James remained under the care of Alexander Erskine, whom he had reason to believe his enemy, it was evident that the continuance of his authority must be precarious. Already, he saw his sovereign surrounded by those who, for their own ends, sought to persuade him that he was arrived at an age when he ought to take the government into his own hands.

So far-sighted and experienced a political intriguer as Morton could not be sensible of all this, without speculating on the best mode of encountering the storm when it did arrive, and averting the wreck of his power. To continue sole regent much longer was evidently full of difficulty; but to flatter the young monarch by a nominal sovereignty, and to rule him as effectually under the title of king, as he had done when sole regent, would be no arduous matter, considering his tender years, provided he could undermine the influence of Erskine, his governor, and crush the confederacy with Argyle and Athole. In the mean season, he resolved to await his time and watch their proceedings. But the regent, although cautious and calculating, was not aware of the full extent of the confederacy against him; and the catastrophe arrived more suddenly than he had anticipated. The intrigues of Argyle and Athole had not escaped the eyes of Walsingham; and in December 1577, Elizabeth, suspecting an impending revolution, despatched Sir Robert Bowes to Scotland, with the hope of preventing any open rupture between Morton and the nobility. He was instructed to inculcate the absolute necessity of

union, to prevent both themselves and her kingdom from falling a sacrifice to the practices of foreign powers; and to threaten Morton, that, if he continued refractory, and refused to make up his differences with his opponents, she would make no scruple to cast him off, and herself become a party against him. He carried also a flattering letter from the queen to the Earl of Athole, in which she assured him of her favourable feelings, and recommended peace.[1]

For a moment, the envoy appears to have succeeded; but he was aware that the friendship professed on both sides was hollow, and the lull of civil faction only temporary. This is evident from a letter which he wrote to Leicester, upon his return to Berwick. "Albeit," said he, "those matters [in Scotland] are for a season wrapped up, yet it is not unlike, without wise handling and some charge to her majesty, that the fire will be readily kindled again. . . . The readiest way, in my opinion, to preserve the realm in quietness, with continuance of this amity, is to appease and ———[2] all the griefs between the regent and others of the realm, and by friendly reconciliation and union to make him gracious amongst them; for which he must receive some apt lessons, with gentleness, from her majesty: but with the same, he must also receive some comfort agreeable to his nature."[3] It is evident from this, that Bowes had become convinced that, to conciliate Morton and preserve peace, Elizabeth must deal less in obiurgation, and more in solid coin, than she had lately done; nor need we wonder that the envoy, afraid of undertaking so delicate a task, was happy to return. But the queen, who had received some new and alarming information of the success of French intrigue in Scotland, commanded him to revisit Edinburgh, and watch the proceedings of both parties. Even this, however, did not appear enough; and soon after, Randolph was despatched on a mission to the young king and the regent, its object being similar to that of Bowes, but his instructions more urgent and decided.[4] Some delay, however, occurred; and he had scarcely arrived in Scotland, when the clouds which had been so long gathering burst upon the head of the regent. The rapidity of the movements of the conspirators, and their complete success, were equally remarkable. On the 4th of March 1577–8, Argyle rode with his usual retinue to Stirling, and being immediately admitted by Erskine to an interview with the young king, complained loudly of Morton's insolent and oppressive conduct, not only to himself, but to the whole nobility and people. He implored him to call a convention to examine their grievances; and, if he found them true, to take the government upon himself, and put an end to a system which, whilst it cruelly oppressed his subjects, left him nothing but the name of a king. These arguments were enforced by Erskine the governor; the famous Buchanan, one of the tutors of the young monarch, threw all his weight into the same scale; and the other confederates who had joined the conspiracy, Glammis the chancellor, the Abbot of Dunfermline, the secretary, Tullibardine the comptroller, and the Lords Lindsay, Ruthven, Ogilvy, and others, eagerly joined in recommending such a course. Athole at this time was absent: but he arrived, no doubt by concert, at the moment his presence was most necessary; and being instantly admitted into the castle, and led to the king, his opinion was urgently demanded. Scarcely, however, had he time to deliver it, and to express his

[1] MS. Instructions to Thomas Randolph, January 30, 1577-8, State-paper Office. Original draft of MS. Letter, State-paper Office, the Queen's Majesty to the Earl of Athole, December 1577.

[2] A word in the original is here illegible.

[3] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 86, Sir R. Bowes to Leicester, October 9, 1577, Berwick.

[4] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 3, Instructions given, 31st January, to Thomas Randolph. Also MS., State-paper Office, Mr Randolph's several Instructions in his Ambassades.

detestation of the tyranny by which they had been so long kept down, when a messenger brought letters from Morton, keenly reprobating the conduct of the northern earls. He remonstrated with the king on the outrage committed against his royal person and himself; represented the necessity of inflicting on such bold offenders speedy and exemplary punishment; and concluded by declaring his anxiety to resign his office, if his royal master was prepared to overlook such proceedings. This offer was too tempting to be rejected: letters were addressed to the nobility, requiring their instant attendance at court. Argyle, Athole, and Erskine took care that those summonses should find their way only to their friends. The convention assembled; a resolution was unanimously passed that the king should take the government upon himself; and before the regent had time to retract, he was waited upon by Glammis the chancellor, and Lord Herries, who brought a message from his sovereign, requiring his immediate resignation. Although startled at the suddenness of the demand, Morton was too proud, or too wary, to pretend any repugnance. He received the envoys with cheerfulness; rode with them from his castle at Dalkeith to the capital; and there, at the Cross, heard the herald and the messenger-at-arms proclaim his own deprivation, and the assumption of the government by the young king. He then, in the presence of the people, resigned the ensigns of his authority; and, without a murmur or complaint, retired to one of his country seats, where he seemed wholly to forget his ambition, and to be entirely engrossed in the tranquil occupations of husbandry and gardening.

The news of this revolution was instantly communicated by Randolph to his friend Killigrew, in this laconic and characteristic epistle, written when he was on the eve of throwing himself on horseback to proceed to England, and in person inform Elizabeth of the alarming change:—

"All the devils in hell are stirring and in great rage in this country. The regent is discharged, the country broken, the chancellor slain by the Earl of Crawford, four killed of the town out of the castle, and yet are we in hope of some good quietness, by the great wisdom of the Earl of Morton. There cometh to her majesty from hence an ambassador shortly. I know not yet who, but Sandy Hay in his company. It behoveth me to be there before: and so shew my wife."[1]

The death of the chancellor, Lord Glammis, here alluded to by Randolph, was in no way connected with the revolution which he describes, but took place in a casual scuffle between his retinue and that of the Earl of Crawford. His high office was bestowed upon Athole, Morton's chief enemy, and the leader of the confederacy which had deposed him. But this, though it preserved the influence of the successful faction, scarcely compensated for the loss of their associate, who was accounted one of the wisest and most learned men in Scotland.

Meanwhile, the confederated nobles followed up their advantages. As the king had not yet completed his twelfth year, a council of twelve was appointed. It consisted of the Earls of Argyle, Athole, Montrose, and Glencairn; the Lords Ruthven, Lindsay, and Herries; the Abbots of Newbottle and Dunfermline; the Prior of St Andrews; and two supernumerary or extraordinary councillors—Buchanan, the king's tutor, and James Makgill, the clerk-register. All royal letters were to be signed by the king and four of this number; and as the first exercise of their power, they required from Morton the delivery of the castle of Edinburgh, the palace of Holyrood, the mint, and the queen's jewels and treasure. To all this prostration of his former greatness, he appears to have made no resistance; but simply requested, that, in the next parliament, they should pass an act approv-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Killigrew, 20th March 1577 — that is, 1577-8. Signed jocularly, *Thomazo del Niente*. Sandy Hay was Alexander Hay, clerk-register.

ing of his administration during his continuance in the regency. Morton then held a hurried conference with Randolph, before that ambassador set off for the English court, intrusted him with a brief letter to Lord Burghley, written in his new character as a private man,[1] and seemed prepared, with perfect contentment, to sink into that condition.

It was evident, however, from the expressions he used in this short note, that he had informed Randolph of some ulterior design for his resumption of power, which he did not choose to commit to writing; and that the ambassador, long versant in Scottish broils and intrigues, considered it a wise and likely project. Nor was he wrong in this conclusion: for the development of this counter-revolution, which restored Morton to power, followed almost immediately; and the outbreak was as sudden as the success was complete.

The king's lords, as Argyle and his friends were called, had formed their council,[2] assembled in the capital, conferred the chancellor's place on Athole, and proclaimed a parliament to be held on the 10th of June. On the 24th of April, the General Assembly met at Edinburgh; and having chosen Mr Andrew Melvil to be their moderator, proceeded to their deliberations with their usual zeal and energy. It was determined to revise the Book of Church Polity, and lay it before the king and council; and a blow was aimed at the late episcopal innovations, by a declaration that, owing to the great corruption already visible in the state of bishops, no see should be filled up till the next General Assembly of the Church.[3] During these transactions Morton lived in retirement, and appeared wholly engrossed in his rural occupations; but he had secretly gained to his interest the young Earl of Mar, whose sister was the wife of Angus, Morton's heir, and the head of the house of Douglas. To Mar he artfully represented that he was unjustly and shamefully treated by his uncle, Erskine the governor. He, the young earl, who was no longer a boy, was entitled by hereditary right to the government of Stirling castle; but his uncle usurped it, and with it kept hold of the king's person. It was Alexander Erskine, not the Earl of Mar, who was now considered the head of that ancient house. Would he submit to this ignominy, when, by a bold stroke, he might recover his lost rights; when the house of Douglas, with all its strength and vassalage, was ready to take his part; and his uncles, the Abbots of Dryburgh and Cambuskenneth, offered their counsel and assistance? These arguments easily gained over the young lord; and as he and his retinue were generally lodged in the castle, he determined to put Morton's plan in execution.

On the 26th April, about five in the morning, before many of the garrison were stirring, Mar, who had slept that night in the castle, assembled his retinue, under the pretence of a hunting party, and riding to the gates with the Abbots of Dryburgh and Cambuskenneth, called for the keys. He was met by his uncle, Erskine the governor, with a small company, who for the moment suspected nothing; but finding himself rudely accosted as a usurper by the abbots, instantly dreaded some false play. To shout treason, seize a halbert from one of the guard, and call to his servants, was with Erskine the work of a moment; but, ere assistance arrived, his little band was surrounded, his son crushed to death in the tumult, and himself thrust without the gates into an outer hall, whilst Mar seized the keys, put down all resistance, and became master of the castle. In the midst of this uproar the young king awoke, and rushing in great terror from his chamber, tore his hair, and called out that the Master of Erskine was slain. He was assured that his governor was safe; and the Earl of Argyle, who had been

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, the Earl Morton to Lord Burghley, March 28, 1578. He signs simply, "Morton."

[2] MS. Record of the Privy-council, in Register-house, Edinburgh, March 24, 1577-8.

[3] MS., Calderwood, pp. 1055-1059.

roused by the tumult, finding the two abbots arguing with Erskine in the hall, but shewing him no personal violence, affected to consider it a family quarrel between the uncle and the nephew, and retired, after advising an amicable adjustment. News of the tumult was, that evening, carried to the council at Edinburgh, accompanied by an assurance from Mar, Argyle, and Buchanan the king's tutor, that the dispute was adjusted. Upon this they despatched Montrose, the same night, to Stirling, who, coming alone, was courteously received and admitted into the castle; but next day, when the council rode thither in a body and demanded admittance, this was peremptorily refused by Mar. They should all see the king, he said, but it must be one by one; and no councillor should enter the gates with more than one attendant.[1]

Incensed at this indignity, the council assembled in Stirling, and issued a proclamation, prohibiting any resort of armed men thither, whilst they sent secret orders to convoke their own forces. But their measures were too late; Douglas of Lochleven had already entered the castle, joined Mar, and communicated with Morton, whose hand, it was strongly suspected, although it did not appear, had managed the whole. Angus, meantime, by his directions, was ready, at six hours' warning, with all the armed vassals of the house of Douglas; and the ex-regent, forgetting his gardens and pleasure grounds, hurried from his rural seclusion, and reappeared in public, the same subtle, daring, and unscrupulous leader as before.[2]

Events now crowded rapidly on each other. At the earnest request of the young king, an agreement took place between Mar and his uncle, Alexander Erskine. The earl retained the castle of Stirling, and with it the custody of the royal person. To the Master of Erskine, so Alexander was called, was given the keeping of the castle of Edinburgh; and in a meeting held at Craigmillar, between Morton, Athole, and Argyle, it was decided that they should next day repair together to Stirling, and adjust all differences before the king in person. This was determined on the 8th of May; and that evening the two northern earls, after sharing Morton's hospitality at Dalkeith, rode with him to Edinburgh. In the morning, however, the ex-regent was nowhere to be found; and it turned out that he had risen before daybreak, and, with a small retinue, had galloped to Stirling, where he was received within the castle, and soon resumed his ascendency both over Mar and the king.[3]

Against this flagrant breach of agreement, Argyle and Athole loudly remonstrated; and Sir Robert Bowes, the English ambassador, exerting himself to restore peace, the young monarch summoned a convention of his nobles; but the northern earls and their associates received such a proposal with derision, and sent word by Lord Lindsay, that they would attend no convention held by their enemies, within a fortress which they commanded. Other lords obeyed, but came fully armed, and with troops of vassals at their back; and both factions mustered in such strength, and exhibited such rancour, that, but for the remonstrances of Bowes, the country would have hurried into war.

Amidst the clamour and confusion, however, it was evident that the ex-regent directed all. By his persuasion a new council was appointed, in which he held the chief place. It was next

[1] MS., Calderwood, British Museum, p. 1061. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. I.

[2] Copy, Caligula, C. v. fol. 99, Sir Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley, Edinburgh, April 23, 1578. In this letter of Bowes to Burghley, written in the midst of this revolution, and on the very day the Council rode to Stirling, he says, "What storm shall fall out of these swelling heats, doth not yet appear. But I think, verily, within two or three days, it will burst into some open matter, discovering sufficiently the purposes intended; wherein, to my power, I shall seek to quench all violent rages, and persuade to unity and concord amongst them."

[3] MS., Calderwood, British Museum. Ayscough, 4735, p. 1061. Also original draft, State-paper Office, Articles delivered by Argyle, Athole, &c., to Lord Lindsay.

determined to send the Abbot of Dunfermline as ambassador from the young king to Elizabeth. He was instructed to thank that princess for the special favour with which she had regarded him from his birth, to confirm the peace between the two countries, and to propose a stricter league for mutual defence, and the maintenance of true religion.[1]

The parliament had been summoned to meet in July at Edinburgh: but Morton was well aware of his unpopularity in that city, and dreaded to bring the king into the midst of his enemies. By his persuasion, therefore, the young monarch changed the place of assembly to the great hall within Stirling castle, where he knew all would be secure. But this new measure gave deep offence; and when the day approached, Argyle, Athole, Montrose, Lindsay, and Herries, with their adherents, assembled in the capital, declaring that nothing should compel them to attend a parliament within a citadel garrisoned by their mortal enemies, and where it would be a mockery to expect any free discussion.

Despising this opposition, Morton hurried on his measures, and the estates assembled in the great hall within Stirling castle.[2] It was opened by the king in person; but scarcely had the members taken their seats, when Montrose and Lord Lindsay presented themselves as commissioners from Argyle, Athole, and their adherents, and declared that this could in no sense be called a free parliament. It was held, they said, within an armed fortress; and for this cause the noble peers, whose messengers they were, had refused to attend it; "and we now come," said Lindsay, with his usual brevity and bluntness, "to protest against its proceedings." Morton here interrupted him, and commanded him and his companion to take their places; to which Lindsay answered, that he would stand there till the king ordered him to his seat. James then repeated the command, and the old lord sat down. After a sermon, which was preached by Duncanson, the minister of the royal household, and a harangue by Morton, who, in the absence of Athole, the chancellor, took upon him to fill his place, the estates proceeded to choose the Lords of the Articles; upon which Lindsay again broke in upon the proceedings, calling all to witness, that every act of such a parliament was null, and the choosing of the lords an empty farce. This second attack threw Morton into an ungovernable rage, in which he unsparingly abused his old associate. "Think ye, sir," said he, "that this is a court of churls or brawlers? Take your own place, and thank God that the king's youth keeps you safe from his resentment."—"I have served the king in his minority," said Lindsay, "as faithfully as the proudest among ye; and I think to serve his grace no less truly in his majority." Upon which Morton was observed to whisper something in the king's ear, who, blushing and hesitating, delivered himself of a little speech, which, no doubt, had been prepared for him beforehand. "Lest any man," said he, "should judge this not to be a free parliament, I declare it free; and those who love me will think as I think."[3]

This silenced Lindsay, and the proceedings went on; but Montrose, abruptly leaving the hall, rode post to Edinburgh. It was reported that he bore a secret letter from the king, imploring his subjects to arm and relieve him from the tyranny of Morton. It is certain that the recusant earl drew a vivid picture of the late regent's insolence, and roused the citizens to such a pitch of fury, that they mustered in arms, and declared that they would rescue their sovereign from the hands of a traitor who had sold them to the English. Nothing could be more grateful to Argyle and Athole than such a spirit; and sending word to the townsmen, that they would speedily join them with a force which would soon bring their enemies to rea-

[1] MS. draft, State-paper Office, June 18, 1578.

[2] July 16, 1578.

[3] MS., Calderwood, British Museum, pp. 1062, 1065.

son, they summoned their feudal services, and prepared for war.[1]

Montrose's sudden retreat saved him from imprisonment; for next day an order of privy-council appeared, commanding him and Lindsay his associate to confine themselves to their own lodgings under pain of rebellion.[2] In the meantime, the parliament proceeded. Morton's demission of the regency, and the king's acceptance of the government, were confirmed: an ample approval and discharge was given him of all the acts done during his regency, and a new council appointed, in which he himself sat as chief, and could, in any emergency, command a majority. The revolution was thus complete. He had lost the name of regent, but he had retained his power; and the nominal assumption of the government by the young king had removed many difficulties which before trammelled and perplexed him.[3]

But this daring and experienced politician had men to deal with, who, having been trained in his own school, were not easily put down; and scarcely had the arrangements for the new government been completed, when Argyle and Athole occupied the city of Edinburgh, and communicating with the leading ministers of the Kirk, now completely estranged from Morton, assembled their forces. It was in vain that Sir Robert Bowes, the English ambassador, remonstrated against this; in vain that a charge from the privy-council was fulminated against the two earls, commanding them, on pain of treason, to depart from Edinburgh within twenty-four hours. Both sides flew to arms: the country, so lately restored to peace, again resounded with warlike preparation: proclamations and counter-proclamations were discharged against each other; summonses for their armed vassals issued in every direction; and so readily were the orders obeyed, that Argyle and Athole, who had marched out of Edinburgh on the 11th August with only one thousand men, found themselves, on mustering at Falkirk on the 13th, seven thousand strong. Of these troops the greater part were animated by the deadliest hatred of Morton, especially the hardy bands of the Merse and Teviotdale, led by their wardens, Coldingknowes and Cessford. They carried before them a banner of blue sarcenet, on which was painted a boy within a grated window, with the distich, "*Liberty I crave, and cannot it have.*"[4] This was meant to represent the king's thraldom to Morton; and below it was their answer, declaring that they would die to set him free. On the other side came Angus, who had been recently proclaimed lieutenant-general to the king, with a body of five thousand men; and the skirmishing between the advanced parties of each army had commenced, when Sir Robert Bowes, accompanied by Lawson and Lindsay, the two principal ministers of the Kirk, rode hastily from the capital, and again offered himself, in the name of his mistress the Queen of England, as a peacemaker between the rival factions.[5]

In this humane office, after prolonged and bitter discussions, he was successful. The young king, or rather Morton in his name, declared that, foreseeing the wreck and misery of the realm, if the present divisions were not speedily removed, he was ready to meet the wishes of the Queen of England; and therefore commanded his nobility, on both sides, to disband their forces. To reassure Argyle and Athole's faction, their late conduct in taking arms was accepted as loyal service; Argyle, Lindsay, and Morton, so recently denounced traitors, were added to the privy-council; a committee of eight noblemen was to be

[1] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 101, Lord Hunsdon to Burghley, August 19, 1578, Berwick.

[2] MS. Books of Privy-council, Register-house, Edinburgh, 17th July 1578.

[3] Draft, State-paper Office, Names of the King's Ordinary Council, and Acts of Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 94.

[4] MS. Letter, Caligula, C. v. fol. 101, Lord Hunsdon to Burghley, Berwick, August 19, 1578. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. II. In these transactions the celebrated Buchanan acted as a kind of Secretary of State. Calderwood, MS., fol. 1071.

[5] MS., Calderwood, p. 1071.

chosen, to advise with the king upon the best mode of reconciling his nobility; and, from this moment, free access was to be afforded to all noblemen, barons, or gentlemen, who came to offer their service to their prince.[1] To these conditions both parties agreed; and by the judicious management of Bowes, Scotland was saved for the present from the misery of civil war.

This minister, after the service he had thus performed, remained for some time resident ambassador at the Scottish court, where Morton's successful intrigues had once more established him as the chief ruler in the state; a result which was viewed with much satisfaction by Elizabeth, who, even after his demission of his high office, had never ceased to give him the title of regent.[2] For the name, however, he cared little; it was power to which he looked; and this, having for the moment secured, he was determined not speedily again to lose. The great principles upon which he had hitherto conducted the government, were a strict amity with England, opposition to all foreign intrigue, a determined resistance to the deliverance of the Scottish queen, and a resolution to maintain the Protestant Reformation. On this last important point, however, his motives had become suspected by the influential body of the ministers of the Kirk. This was owing to his introduction into Scotland of the episcopal form of church government, and his resistance to the Book of Church Polity, which had been drawn up by the General Assembly, and presented to the king and the three estates for their approval. Yet still, although no longer the favourite of the clergy, Morton was anti-Catholic enough to be preferred by them to Athole, a professed Roman Catholic, and his associates, who, for the most part, were either avowed or suspected Romanists; and for the present the ministers refrained from endangering the restored peace of the country by any violence of opposition.

Yet it was impossible for any acute observer not to see that the times were precarious. The elements of discord were lulled in their active efforts, but not destroyed; the intrigues of France and Spain for the deliverance of Mary, and the re-establishment of the ancient faith, were still busily carried on; and Bowes, the ambassador, who from long experience was intimately acquainted with the state of the rival factions, regarded the court and the country as on the eve of another change. On the 3d November, shortly previous to his leaving Scotland, he thus wrote from Edinburgh to Lord Burghley:—

"By my common letters to the lords of her majesty's council, the weltering estate of this realm, that now attendeth but a tide for a new alteration of the court, will appear to your lordship, and how necessary it is in this change approaching, and in the confederacies presently knitting, to get some hold for her majesty amongst them."[3] It had been his own earnest endeavour to get such hold over them; and for this purpose he had entered into negotiations with the Earl of Caithness, one of the principal leaders of the confederacy against Morton. He and his associates had sent articles of agreement, in the usual form, to the English ambassador: but they expected also the usual gratuity, and, as it turned out, valued their devotion to Elizabeth at a higher rate than that parsimonious princess was disposed to reckon it. Caithness, indeed, was of loose and accommodating principles, both in politics and religion; and although Bowes flattered himself that, on his departure from Scotland, he had left the faction opposed to Morton very favourably disposed to England, he did not conceal from Walsingham his apprehensions that the continuance of this feeling was precarious. "I fear," said he, in his

[1] MS., State-paper Office, copy of the time, Articles agreed on in Scotland between the King and the Lords, 13th August 1578.

[2] Instructions to Randolph, 31st January 1578, Caligula, C. v. fol. 111, British Museum.

[3] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 109, Sir R. Bowes to Burghley, Edinburgh, November 3, 1578.

letter to this minister, "that no great inwardness shall be found in them, when they find her majesty's liberality coming slowly to them, that use not often at the fairest call to stoop to empty lure."[1]

These apprehensions of the English minister regarding the unsettled state of Scotland were not without good foundation. Mary's indefatigable friend, the Bishop of Ross, whose intrigues in the affair of the Duke of Norfolk had already given such alarm to Elizabeth, was now busily employed on the continent, exciting France, Spain, Germany, and the Papal court to unite for her deliverance; and holding out the present crisis of affairs in Scotland as eminently favourable for the restoration of the true faith. The extent to which these operations were carried, was amply proved by a packet of intercepted letters, written in cipher, and seized by Walsingham or Burghley, whose spies and informers were scattered all over Europe. It was found that the Earl of Athole, a Roman Catholic, the great leader of the late cabal against Morton, and chancellor of Scotland, was in constant correspondence with the Bishop of Ross. The letters of the Scottish queen herself, written immediately after Morton's resignation of the regency, to the same prelate, and directed to be communicated to the Pope, expressed her satisfaction at the late revolution in Scotland, and her zealous concurrence with his holiness in his project for the restitution of the true faith in Britain, by the united efforts of the great Catholic powers. She alluded, in the same letter, to a project for the carrying off her son, the young king, to the continent, which the Pope had offered to forward by an advance of money. She informed him, that in consequence of the changes in Scotland since Morton's demission, she felt perfectly assured of the affection and services of the young prince, and of his counsellors; she urged the necessity of placing him, if possible, in the hands of her friends of the house of Lorraine —alluding to the imminent danger he incurred from Elizabeth's intrigues to get possession of his person, or even to deprive him of his life. She declared her conviction, that if her son were once in France, and removed from the sphere of Elizabeth's influence, a more lenient treatment of herself would ensue; and, lastly, she directed Ross to communicate upon all these matters with the Pope's nuncio at Paris.[2]

In an intercepted letter, written about the same time by Beaton, bishop of Glasgow, Mary's ambassador at the court of France, to the Bishop of Ross, the determination of Henry the Third and the Duke of Guise to assist her to their utmost, was clearly intimated.[3] In the autumn of the same year, and soon after the pacification between the rival factions in Scotland, which we have seen effected by Bowes, the Bishop of Ross made a progress into Germany, with the object of exciting the emperor and the duke of Bavaria to unite with the other Catholic powers for the speedy liberation of his royal mistress, and the restoration of religion. From both potentates he received the utmost encouragement. The emperor declared his readiness to co-operate with the endeavours of his brother princes for the deliverance of the Scottish queen, and the securing to her and her son their undoubted right to the English throne; and the duke professed his determination to peril both property and life itself for the restoration of the Catholic faith.[4] This encouraging information was conveyed by Ross to the Cardinal Como, in a letter written

[1] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 110. Sir R. Bowes to ————, November 24, 1578. I suspect to Walsingham.

[2] MS., British Museum, ex cyphris Reginæ Scotiæ ad Episcopum Rossensem, Caligula, C. v. fol. 102.

[3] Ex literis Archiesp. Glascuensis ad Episcop. Rossen., June 14, 1578. Caligula, C. v. fol. 103 d., British Museum.

[4] MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 104 d. Ex literis Episcop. Rossensis ad Cardinalem Comensem, Pragæ, September 27, 1578.

from Prague on the 27th September 1578, which, unfortunately for his mistress, fell into the hands of her enemies; and, at the same time, this indefatigable prelate, at the request of the emperor, had drawn up a paper on the state of parties in Scotland, in which he carefully marked the relative strength of the Roman Catholic and Protestant peers,[1] and pointed out the favourable crisis which had occurred. In a second interview, to which the emperor admitted him, he described the state of parties in Scotland, following certain directions communicated by his royal mistress;[2] and by all these united exertions, there is no doubt that a deep impression was made throughout Europe in favour of the Scottish queen. Well, therefore, might Sir Robert Bowes describe the condition of affairs in Scotland as one full of alarm; and before we condemn Elizabeth for her severity to Mary, we must weigh the perils to the Protestant cause which these intercepted letters so clearly demonstrated. But, on the other hand, it must not be forgotten, that these very dangers arose out of the injustice of her imprisonment.

In the meantime, Morton once more bore the chief sway in Scotland, where his triumph over the conspiracy of Athole and Argyle had really increased his power; whilst his possession of the king's person enabled him to overawe the young monarch as effectually as he had ever done when regent. This resumption of strength he now employed to crush the house of Hamilton.

The Duke of Chastelherault was dead; his eldest son, the Earl of Arran, had been insane for some years; and in these melancholy circumstances, the leaders of this potent and ancient family were his brothers, the Lord of Arbroath and Lord Claud Hamilton. Arbroath, in the event of the death of Mary and the young king, was next heir to the throne; and his possessions were described by Bowes as the greatest and the richest in Scotland.[3] These lands were conterminous with the vast estates of the Earl of Angus, which included nearly all the "Overward" of Clydesdale, as Arbroath's did the "Netherward;" and Morton and the Douglases had long looked upon them with greedy eyes. But although his enmity against Arbroath and his brother was entirely selfish, Morton was not guilty of injustice when he persuaded the young king that it was his duty to proceed with severity against the house of Hamilton: it had a long reckoning of crime and blood to account for. There was little doubt that the late Archbishop of St Andrews, its chief leader and adviser, had suffered justly as an accessary to the murder of Darnley; and this cast a strong suspicion of implication upon its present leaders. It was certain that they were guilty of the death of the Regent Moray; it was as undoubted that Lord Claud Hamilton had given the order which led to the murder of the Regent Lennox; and the houses of Mar and Douglas were bitterly hostile to the whole race.

The Hamiltons being thus miserably situated, the terrible work of feudal retribution commenced, and was prosecuted in the rapid and cruel spirit of the times. Morton and Angus in person besieged the castle of Hamilton, commanded by Arthur Hamilton of Merton.[4] He offered to surrender on being assured of his life, and pardon to himself and his garrison of all their offences, except the murder of the king and the two regents; but these terms were scornfully refused, and he was at last compelled to submit unconditionally.[5] Much interest was made to save him: but Mar and Buchan, with Lochleven, and James Douglas, a natural son of Morton's, were furious

[1] MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 105.

[2] Ibid., fol. 106.

[3] MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 82. Also draft of the King's Proclamation against John Hamilton, sometime Commendator of Arbroath, and Claud Hamilton, sometime Commendator of Paisley, dated May 2, 1579, Bowes Papers.

[4] May 4, 1579.

[5] MS. Letter to Sir George Bowes, from (as I suspect) Mr Archibald Douglas, Edinburgh, May 24, 1579, copy of the time, Bowes Papers.

at the idea of his escaping their vengeance; declaring that the lives of any ten Hamiltons were a poor recompense for the Regent Moray. He and his company, therefore, were hanged; amongst whom was Arthur Hamilton, a brother of Bothwellhaugh who had shot the regent, and who was known to have held the stirrup when the murderer threw himself on horseback and escaped.[1] The castle of Draffen, another stronghold of this great family, in which the Duchess of Chastelherault and the unfortunate Earl of Arran had taken refuge, was invested and taken about the same time, its garrison having abandoned it during the night; and in a convention of the nobility held soon after at Stirling, it was determined to complete the ruin of this devoted house by processes of treason in the next parliament. Nothing could be more wretched than its condition at this moment: the Lord of Arbroath had fled to Flanders, where he was an almost houseless exile; Lord Claude escaped to England, and threw himself upon the compassion of Elizabeth; its lesser chiefs were trembling under an impending sentence of forfeiture; and its head, the Earl of Arran, whose royal descent and great power had made him, in former days, an almost accepted suitor, first of Elizabeth, and afterwards of Mary, was a prisoner, hopelessly insane, and placed, with his unhappy mother the duchess, under the charge of Captain Lammie, a soldier of fierce and brutal habits, and a determined enemy of the house of Hamilton. Yet these accumulated miseries do not appear to have excited the slightest degree of sympathy in this unfeeling age; and when Elizabeth, compassionating the misfortunes of the Hamiltons, despatched her envoy, Captain Arrington, to plead their cause at the Scottish court, he found the young king, and the whole body of the nobility, inflamed with the deepest hatred against them, expressing a conviction that their restoration would be dangerous to his person, and resolute against their pardon or return.[2]

In the midst of these cruel transactions, Athole the chancellor, and the great leader of the confederacy against Morton, died suddenly, under circumstances of much suspicion.[3] He had just returned from a banquet, given by Morton at Stirling to commemorate the reconciliation of the nobles; and the symptoms of poison so strongly indicated themselves both before and after death, that his friends did not hesitate to say publicly that he had met with foul play from the ex-regent, who, however, treated the report with contempt. The body was opened, and examined by a learned circle of "mediciners, chirurgeons, and poticaries;" but they disagreed in their verdict. By some the poison was so plainly detected, that they declared there was not a doubt upon the subject; whilst Dr Preston, the most eminent physician of the time, was equally positive that there was no poison in the case,—certainly none in the stomach. On being irritated by contradiction, however, he had the temerity to touch a portion of its contents with his tongue, and, to the triumph of his dissentient brethren, almost died in consequence, nor did he ever completely recover the unlucky experiment.[4] In

1 MS., British Museum, Occurrences out of Scotland, May 14, 1579, and May 24, 1579, Caligula, C. v. fol. 120, copy. Also MS. Letter, May 9, Bowes Papers. Also MS. ibid., Caligula, C. v. fol. 122, Notes of Occurrences, 1st June 1579. Also MS., Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough's Catalogue, 4735, fol. 1083.

2 MS. Letter, British Museum, Nicholas Arrington to Burghley, October 10, 1579, Berwick. Caligula, C. v. fol. 130. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. III.

3 He died at Kincardine castle, near Auchterarder, on the north side of the Ochils, a stronghold of the Earl of Montrose, on the 25th April 1579. "The whole friends of the dead are convened at Dunkeld upon the 3d of May, where the young Earls of Athole and Montrose put in deliberation what were best way to come by revenge of this heinous fact." MS. Letter, 5th May 1579, without a signature, to Sir George Bowes, enclosed in a letter to Mr Archibald Douglas. Bowes Papers. Also MS. Letter, Bowes Papers, —— to Sir R. Bowes. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. IV.

4 MS., Calderwood, British Museum, pp. 1083, 1084.

the meantime, though the dark report was thus strengthened, Morton's power, and the absence of all direct proof, protected him from any further proceedings.

Some time after this, the General Assembly of the Kirk met at Edinburgh; and having chosen Mr Thomas Smeton for their moderator, at his request appointed a council of the brethren to advise with him upon matters of importance. To this council Mr Thomas Duncanson, minister of the royal household, presented a letter from the young king, which contained a request that the Assembly would at present abstain from debating upon such matters touching the polity of the Kirk, as in a former conference had been referred for debate and decision to the estates of parliament. The same letter informed them that parliament would shortly meet and take these matters into consideration; and it expressed the king's hope that, in the mean season, the Assembly would exert themselves to promote peace and godly living, not only amongst their own members, but throughout the whole body of the subjects of the realm; so that the expectations of such busy meddlers as were enemies to the public tranquillity should be disappointed.

The Assembly having taken this royal letter into consideration, in its turn appointed a committee of their brethren, the principal of whom were Erskine of Dun, Duncanson the king's minister, and Andrew Melvil, to wait upon the king, with some requests to which they besought his attention. These were, that he would interdict all parents, under heavy penalties, from sending their children to be educated at the university of Paris, or other foreign colleges professing Papistry; that he would cause the university of St Andrews, some of whose professors had recently left the Protestant communion, to be reformed in all its colleges and foundations; and take order for the banishment of Jesuits, whom the Assembly denominated "the pestilent dregs of a most detestable idolatry." They further besought him to proceed to a further conference upon such points of church polity as had been left undetermined at the last conference at Stirling, and to desist from controlling or suspending, by his royal letters, any of the decrees of the General Assembly.[1] Calderwood, the zealous and able historian of the Scottish Kirk, has pronounced a high eulogium upon the learning, holiness, and unanimity of this Assembly.[2]

Not long after this, Esmé Stewart, commonly called Monsieur d'Aubigny, cousin to the king, and a youth of graceful figure and accomplishments, arrived in Scotland.[3] He was the son of John Stewart, brother of Matthew, earl of Lennox, the late regent, and had scarce been a week at court when he became a great favourite with his royal relative. It was immediately whispered that he had been sent over by the Guises, to fill Athole's place as leader of the French faction, and to act as a counterpoise to the predominating influence of Morton. He was accompanied by Monsieur Momberneau, and Mr Henry Ker,—the first, a man of great wit and liveliness, gay, gallant, and excelling in all the sports and pastimes to which the young monarch was partial; the second, Ker, of a more subtle and retired character, —who had been long a confidential servant of D'Aubigny's, and was strongly suspected by the ministers of the Kirk to be a secret agent of the Guises.

All this excited the fears of Elizabeth; and the information sent her by her secret agents, both in Scotland and France, was by no means calculated to remove her apprehension. As D'Aubigny and his friends, however, acted as yet with great caution and reserve, the queen contented herself, for the moment, with a mission of observation and inquiry; for which she

[1] MS., Calderwood, sub anno 1579, British Museum, Ayscough's Catalogue, 4735, p. 1092.

[2] Ibid., fol. 1092.

[3] On the 8th September 1579. MS. Letter, Bowes Papers, an anonymous correspondent, whose mark is 4°, to Sir G. Bowes, 9th Sept.

selected Captain Nicolas Arrington, a brave and intelligent officer of the garrison of Berwick, who had already been repeatedly employed in Scotland. His open instructions were to intercede with James for some favour to the Hamiltons; his more secret orders, to acquaint himself with the character and intentions of D'Aubigny, the state of parties, and what projects were then agitated for the young king's marriage. On the first point, the pardon, or at least the more lenient punishment of the house of Hamilton, he prevailed nothing, so deep was James's hatred, or perhaps more truly that of Morton, against it. With regard to the marriage, Arrington informed Burghley, that neither the council nor D'Aubigny had yet made any formal proposal upon the subject. "It was evident," he said, "that the young French stranger had already won the affection of his royal kinsman, and might look for high preferment," probably to be Earl of Lennox, with a large share of the forfeited lands of the Hamiltons, if he could be prevailed upon to change his religion.[1]

The old soldier who thus wrote to Burghley, requested his indulgence, should his information prove incorrect, as he had been more familiar with "another weapon than the pen;" but the course of events soon proved the accuracy of his intelligence. Wherever James went, he insisted on having D'Aubigny beside him. When he removed, for the purpose of holding his parliament, from Stirling to Holyrood, his graceful cousin had splendid apartments provided for him in the palace, next to the royal bed-chamber; and in the sports and pageants with which the citizens received their monarch, the favourite, for so he was now declared, found himself universally regarded and courted. The expensive scale on which these civic festivities were conducted, evinced a remarkable increase in the national wealth. They exhibited the usual confusion of classical, feudal, and religious machinery; in which "Dame Musick," attended by four fair virgins representing the cardinal virtues, and the provost and three hundred citizens, clad in velvet and satin, enacted their parts with great assiduity and success. Whilst the 20th Psalm was being sung, a little child emerged from a silver globe, which opened artificially over the king's head, and fluttering down to his majesty's feet, presented him with the keys of the city. Religion, a grave matron, then conducted him into the High Church; and thence, after hearing sermon, the monarch and the congregation repaired to the Market Cross, where Bacchus sat on a gilded puncheon, with his painted garments and a flowery garland; the fountains ran wine; the principal street of the city was hung with tapestry; and, at the conclusion of the procession, the town presented the king with a cupboard of plate, valued, says a minute chronicler, at six thousand merks.[2]

These pageants were introductory to the parliament which assembled on the 20th of October, and, as had been anticipated by Arrington, was principally occupied with the proscription of the Hamiltons, and the exaltation of D'Aubigny. The Lord Arbroath and Lord Claud Hamilton, with many more of the same name and house, were proclaimed traitors, and their estates forfeited; whilst all who had been partakers in the slaughter of the two regents, Moray and Lennox, were commanded, under pain of death, to remove six miles from court. On the other hand, the king conferred the earldom of Lennox upon his favourite, and presented him, at the same time, with the rich abbacy of Arbroath. Not long after, the stream of royal favour flowed still more munificently: he was made chamberlain for Scotland; his earldom, it was reported, would be soon erected into a dukedom; and he was so caressed by the young sovereign, that Argyle and many

[1] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 130, Nicolas Arrington to Burghley, October 10, 1579, Berwick.

[2] Moyse's Memoirs, Bannatyne edition, p. 25. Also MS., Calderwood, British Museum, vol. ii. p. 1099. Historie of James the Sext, p. 179, Bannatyne edition.

of the principal nobility began not only to treat him with high consideration, but, according to the common usage of the times, to enter into those bands or covenants by which they bound themselves to his service, and with which the reader of this history is already so well acquainted.[1]

Morton, however, and the ministers of the Kirk, still kept aloof: the one animated by that proud and haughty feeling which prompted him rather to crush than to court a rival: the ministers, from the horror with which they regarded all Roman Catholics, and the suspicions they had from the first entertained that D'Aubigny was a secret emissary of the Pope and the Guises. When these fears were once excited, the churches resounded with warnings against the dark machinations of Popery; and the pulpit, as had frequently happened in these times, became a political engine. It was recollected that the Duke of Guise had accompanied D'Aubigny to Dieppe, and remained with him for many hours in secret conference in the ship; D'Aubigny had been known, also, to have had consultations with the Bishops of Glasgow and Ross;[2] and for what purpose (so the ministers argued) could the forty thousand crowns, which he brought with him, be so naturally applied as in corrupting the Protestant nobles? Nay, was it not known that a part had already found its way into the coffers of the Lady Argyle? and did not all men see the warm and sudden friendship between her husband the earl and the favourite?[3]

Amid these suspicions and jealousies the year 1579 passed away; and it was apparent to all who regarded the state of the country with attention, that it could not long remain without some sudden change or convulsion. The king was wretchedly poor; and the revenues of the crown, during his minority, had been plundered and dilapidated to such an extent, that he could not raise three thousand pounds to defray the expenses of his household. The nobility, on the other hand, were rich; they had prospered as the crown had sunk; and so determined were they to hold fast their gains, that they "would spare nothing they possessed to the king's aid, without deadly feud."[4] It had been earnestly recommended that the king's person, in those unsettled times, should be defended by a bodyguard, and that six privy councillors, in rotation, should always remain with the court; but no funds could be raised to pay the soldiers' wages; the councillors refused to support a table for themselves; no money was forthcoming elsewhere; and the king was frequently left almost alone, without court or council around him; a state of destitution which, it was justly apprehended, might lead to the most dangerous results.

When Elphinston, abbot of Dunfermline, was sent to England in the preceding summer,[5] his main purpose was to explain to the queen the poverty under which the young prince had entered on his government; the great insecurity of his person, surrounded as he daily was by men "who had dipped their hands in the blood of his parents and dearest kinsfolks;" and the absolute necessity for a supply of money to pay the expenses of his guards and household.[6] But Elizabeth could not be induced to advance any supplies; and these evils and dangers had ever since been on the increase. Since the arrival of Lennox, too, the feuds amongst the nobility had risen to an alarming height. Morton, jealous of the new favourite, and animated by a hatred of Argyle, absented himself

[1] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 133, and also 135, Bowes to Burghley, October 22, 1579, Berwick. Lennox was created Earl of Lennox (Douglas, vol. ii. p. 99) on March 5, 1579-80.

[2] State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Paulet to Walsingham, August 29, 1579, Paris.

[3] MS.. Calderwood, British Museum, sub anno 1579, fol. 1098.

[4] MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 155, copy Memorial of the present state of Scotland, December 31, 1579.

[5] July 30, 1578.

[6] MS., State-paper Office, Demands of the Abbot of Dunfermline, Ambassador from the King of Scots, 30th July 1578.

from court; the powerful Border septs of the Humes and Cars regarded the ex-regent with the deadliest rancour; Elphinston, the king's secretary, a man of talent, and long his firm friend, was now estranged from him; and even the potent Angus, his nephew and his heir, kept at a safe distance, and watched events. But Morton's great wealth, his energy, courage, and experience, made him still a formidable enemy; and they who most wished his downfall, knew not on what side to attack him. The young king, in the meantime, who had always felt an awe for the late regent, became daily more devoted to Lennox, whom, with a boyish enthusiasm, and a precocious display of theology, he was labouring to convert from what he esteemed his religious errors. He gave him books of controversy, brought him to attend the sermons of the ministers, procured one of the mildest and most learned of their number to instruct him, and so far succeeded, that, if not converted, he was reported to be favourably inclined to the Protestant Church. Any sudden recantation would have been suspicious; and, meanwhile, his royal and youthful mentor congratulated himself upon his favourite's hopeful and inquiring state.[1]

Amid these cares and controversies a sudden rumour arose, none could tell from what quarter, that the Earl of Morton had plotted to seize the king and carry him to Dalkeith. How this was to be affected, no one could tell; but James, who had ridden out on a hunting expedition, precipitately interdicted the sports, and galloped back to Stirling castle. Morton loudly declared his innocence, and defied his calumniators to bring their proofs; yet scarcely had this challenge been given, when the court was again thrown into terror and confusion, by news secretly brought to the Earl of Mar, that Lennox and his faction had fixed on the night of the 10th April to invade the royal apartments, lay hands on the king, hurry him to Dumbarton, and thence transport him to France.[2] It was whispered, also, that a deep confederacy had been formed against the Earl of Morton by the same junto: that Sir James Balfour, now a fugitive in France, and one who was well known to have been a chief accomplice in the murder of the king's father, had promised to purchase his pardon, by giving up the bond for the murder, signed by Morton's own hand; and that thus there was every hope of bringing the hoary and blood-stained tyrant to the scaffold, which had so long waited for him.

In the midst of these ominous rumours, the night of the 10th April arrived, and all in the castle prepared for an attack. Mar permitted none to see the king; soldiers were stationed within and without the royal chamber; and a shout arising, that Lennox ought to be thrust out of the gates, he shut himself up in his apartments, with a strong guard of his friends, armed at all points, and swore that he would set upon any that dared invade him. In the morning, Argyle, Sutherland, Glencairn, and other adherents of Lennox, hurried to Stirling, but were refused admittance to the castle; and their fears for Lennox increased, when they heard it reported that Morton was on the road to join his party. All was thus in terror and uncertainty: men gazed, trembled, and whispered fearfully amongst each other, aware that secret plots were busily concocting; that the ground they stood on was being mined: and yet none could tell where the blow would fall, or when the train might be exploded. At this moment Captain Arrington, Elizabeth's envoy, was in Stirling castle, and thus wrote to Burghley:—"The young king is in heavy case, and much amazed with these troubles, and the more by reason of his great affection towards D'Aubigny, whom he perceives the mark they shoot at. Monsieur d'Aubigny, with his faction, doth offer to abide the trial by law, or otherwise, in their

[1] MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 2, Captain Arrington to Burghley, 4th April 1580, Stirling.

[2] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 8, Captain Arrington to Lord Burghley, 16th April 1580, Berwick.

very persons, that there was never any such plot or meaning by him, or his consent, or by any others to their knowledge, to have drawn the king either to Dumbarton or any other sinister course."[1]

It is difficult to arrive at the truth amidst these conflicting accusations of the two factions. Elizabeth certainly had received a warning from her ambassador in France, that there was a design on foot to have the young king brought thither; and Morton had probably been encouraged by the English queen to prevent it by every possible means.[2] Lennox, on the other hand, although he indignantly, and probably truly, repelled any such treasonable intentions, avowed his wish to reform the council, and protect the king from the pillage of the blood-suckers of the royal revenue, who had been thrust into their offices by Morton and Mar. In this project James himself appears to have borne a part; and had probably intended, under pretence of a hunting party at the Doune of Menteith, to have escaped from the tutelage of Mar, and accomplished a revolution in the court.[3] The secret project, however, was discovered, and defeated by the vigilance of the house of Erskine.

In the meantime, the picture drawn by Arrington, of the dangerous state of the country, threw Elizabeth into alarm, and she immediately despatched Sir Robert Bowes to Stirling. His instructions were to strengthen, by every means, the decaying influence of Morton; to declare the queen's willingness to gain some of the chief in authority by pensions; to pull down the power of Lennox; to plead for the pardon of the Hamiltons; and thoroughly to sift the truth of the late rumours of a conspiracy for carrying off the young king. Bowes also, before he set out, received a letter from Secretary Walsingham, recommending him to use the utmost vigilance in this mission. This, he said, was most necessary, as it was already reported in Spain, that mass was set up once more in Scotland, and arms taken against the Protestants; and, as he knew for certain that Kerr of Fernyhirst, a Roman Catholic and an active friend of the Scottish queen, with Bothwellhaugh, the blood-stained Hamilton who had shot the Regent Moray, had recently ridden post from France into Spain.[4]

On reaching court, the ambassador was received by the young king with great courtesy: but James's manner instantly changed when any allusion was made to the Hamiltons; and it was evident to all that Bowes' exertions on this head would be unavailing.[5] It was apparent, also, that the revival of Morton's former power promised to be a matter of extreme difficulty. He himself was so completely convinced of the strength of his enemies, and the deep estrangement of the king, that he had resolved to retire altogether from public affairs. In a secret conference, held in the night, with Bowes, at Stirling castle, the ex-regent expressed much doubt whether it was not too late to attempt anything against Lennox, who now professed himself a Protestant, and had so completely conciliated the ministers of the Kirk, that they addressed a letter in his commendation to the council.[6]

As to the late rumoured conspiracies for carrying off the king, the ambassador found it difficult to discover the truth; but he was witness to a strange scene of violence and brawling before the council, in which Morton, Mar, and Lennox gave the lie to their accusers; and the king, with much feeling and good sense, exerted himself to restore peace: a striking contrast, no doubt, to Bowes' experience of the de-

[1] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 7, Arrington to Walsingham or Burghley, 10th April 1580, Stirling. The address of the letter is torn away.

[2] Ibid., fol. 17 and 18, copy, Lord Treasurer and Walsingham to Mr Robert Bowes, April 17, 1580.

[3] British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 29, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, May 10, 1580, Stirling.

[4] Draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, May 3, 1580.

[5] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 25, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, May 3, 1580, Stirling.

[6] Ibid., fol. 31, ibid., May 10, 1580, Stirling.

corous gravity and awe preserved by Elizabeth in her council, in which the highest nobles generally spoke upon their knees, and none but her majesty was permitted to lose temper. On the subject of the alleged plot of Lennox, James was at first reserved, although he expressed much love and admiration for Elizabeth; but the ambassador at last gained his confidence, and drew from him many particulars, which shewed that the conspiracy, intended to have been carried into effect at Doune castle, involved the ruin of Morton, the dismissal of Mar and other obnoxious councillors, and a complete reconstruction of the government under Lennox and Argyle. As it appeared, also, that Sir John Seton, Sir George Douglas, and some of the captive queen's most attached servants, were to have been brought into the council, Bowes at once suspected that the design originated in France, and that Lennox and his youthful sovereign acted under the influence of the Guises. He was the more persuaded of this, when Morton assured him that, since D'Aubigny's arrival, the king's feelings had undergone a great change in favour of that country.

But the time called for action, not for speculation; and on consulting with his friends, regarding the most likely means of averting the dangers threatened by this alarming state of things, there were many conflicting opinions. It was recommended to have tried councillors about the king, and a strong body-guard to prevent surprise; as it had been remarked that the late alarms and plots had all broken out when there was scarce a single councillor at court who could be depended upon. Yet this could not be done without money; and where was money to be had in the present exhausted state of the royal revenue?[1] Soon after this, the ambassador took an opportunity of seeing the young king alone, and delivering a secret message from Elizabeth, upon a subject of the deepest interest to both: his succession to the English crown after her death. The particulars of the interview, and the answer given by James, were communicated in cipher, in a letter of which the address is now lost, but which was written probably to Burghley or Walsingham, his usual correspondents when the subject was of high moment. "In private with the king," so wrote the ambassador, "I have offered to acquaint him with a secret greatly importing him and his estate, and lately discovered to me by letters, which were not out of the way in case he should desire sight thereof; and, taking his honour in pledge for the secrecy, which he readily tendered, I opened to him, at large, all the contents specified in the cipher note last sent to me, and to be communicated to him, persuading him earnestly to beware that he made not himself the cause of greater loss to him, than France, Scotland, or Lennox, could countervail. He appeared here to be very much perplexed; affirming that he would both most chiefly follow her majesty's advice, and also ask and require her counsel in all his great adoes. . . . In which good resolution and mind," continued Bowes, "I left him; wherein with good company and handling I think he may be well continued. But Lennox having won great interest in him, and possessing free and sure access to him at all times, . . . I dare not, therefore, assure, in his tender years, any long continuance or sure performance of this promise."[2] These anticipations of James's fickleness proved to be well founded; for neither the prize held out by Elizabeth, nor all the efforts of Bowes, could retain the monarch in his good resolutions. The influence of Lennox and his friends became daily more predominant; his youthful master's arguments on the errors of

[1] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 24 and 27, inclusive, and fol. 28 and 32, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, May 3, 1580. The same to the same, May 10, 1580.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, original, cipher and decipher. The letter contains proof that its date must be May 16 or 17, 1580.

the Church of Rome, seconded by the expositions of the Presbyterian clergy, had, as he affirmed, convinced him; he had publicly avowed his conversion to Protestantism, and had signed the articles of religion drawn up by the Scottish clergy. His enemies were thus deprived of their principal ground of complaint and alarm; and although they accused him of insincerity,—and certainly the circumstances under which this recantation was made were suspicious,—still, as he afterwards died professing himself a Protestant, we have every reason to be lieve his assertions to have been sincere.[1]

But whether at this moment sincere or interested, Lennox's conversion, and consequent increase of power, placed Morton, and the other old friends of England, in a dangerous predicament. Had they been assured of immediate support, they were ready, they said, to resist the intrigues of France, which became every day more successful, the Bishops of Ross and Glasgow keeping up a correspondence with Lennox. But Elizabeth, as Walsingham confessed to Bowes, was so completely occupied and entangled with the negotiations for her marriage with the Duke of Anjou, that every other subject was postponed. No answer, which promised any certain assistance, arrived; and Morton, wearied out and irritated with this neglect, declared to the ambassador, that he would be constrained to provide for his personal safety by a reconciliation with Lennox. "He utterly distrusted," he said, "Elizabeth's intention to be at any charges for the affairs of Scotland; his own peril was great and imminent; yet, had he been backed by England, he would have adventured to beard his enemies, and to have retained the country at the devotion of the queen. It was too late now; and to save himself from ruin, he would be driven to means which could be profitable to neither of the realms, and were much against his heart."[3] Bowes soon after was recalled from Scotland.[4]

CHAPTER II.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1580—1582.

FOR some time after this, Elizabeth's policy towards Scotland was of that vacillating and contradictory kind which estranged her friends and gave confidence to her opponents. She had been early warned by Sir Robert Bowes, then resident at Berwick, of the great strength of the confederacy at the head of which Lennox had placed himself, and that soon no efforts would avail against it.[2] "Such had been," he said, "the success of the French intrigues, that Scotland was running headlong the French course;"[5] and that everything tended to the overthrow of religion, by which we must understand him as meaning the

[1] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 36, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, Edinburgh, May 16, 1580.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, June 27, 1580, Bowes to Walsingham. Also September 1, 1580, Walsingham to Bowes. Also September 6, 1580, Bowes to Walsingham; and September 18, 1580, Walsingham to Bowes, original draft.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, August 2, 1580.

[4] On the 2d August he seems to have been at Edinburgh; on the 10th August he was at Berwick.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Berwick, August 10, 1580.

Presbyterian party in that country. "Still," he added, "all was not irrecoverable, if the queen would dismiss her parsimony, and take the true way to secure friends." But Elizabeth was deaf to these remonstrances. She alternately flattered, remonstrated, and threatened; but she resolutely refused to "go to any charges;" and the effects of her indecision and neglect were soon apparent.[1]

Lennox grew daily more formidable. As he was supported by the favour of the king, and the countenance and money of France, he drew into his party the most powerful of the nobility. His possessions and landed property were already great. Favour after favour was bestowed. Himself, or his friends and retainers, held some of the strongest castles in Scotland; and not long after this, Walsingham, who was anxiously watching his power, heard with dismay, from Bowes, that Dumbarton, one of the most important keys of the kingdom, was to be delivered to the favourite.[2]

This last determination incensed Elizabeth to the highest pitch. She had for some time been engaged in a secret correspondence with the captain of the castle, the noted Cunningham of Drumwhassel, who had promised to retain it at her devotion; and on the first intimation that it was to be placed in the hands of Lennox, she ordered Sir Robert Bowes to ride post from Berwick into Scotland, with a fiery message, to be delivered to the Scottish council. The imperious and unscrupulous temper of the queen was strongly marked in his instructions. If he found the fortress (for so its great strength entitled it to be called) undelivered, he was to remonstrate loudly against its being surrendered to one who, whatever mask the Pope allowed him to wear, was in his heart an enemy to the gospel. If it was too late, and the castle already given up, he was instantly to confer with Morton how so fatal a step could be remedied: "either," to quote the words of the instructions, "by laying violent hands on the duke and his principal associates, in case no other more temperate course can be found, or by some other way that by him might be thought meet."[3]

Bowes hurried on to Edinburgh, met with Morton, whom he found still bold, and ready to engage in any attack upon his rival; and had already given him "some comfort to prick him on"—meaning, no doubt, an advance in money, when new letters arrived from the queen. A single day had revived her parsimony, and cooled her resentment: it would be better, she thought, to try persuasion first, and forbear advising force, or any promise of assistance. None could answer for the consequences of a civil war: they might seize the young king, carry him to Dumbarton, and thence transport him to France.[4]

Bowes was directed, at the same time, to alarm James's fears, for a second time, on the subject of the succession; to assure him, in great secrecy, that if he continued obstinately to prefer D'Aubigny's persuasions to the counsels of his mistress, his right would be cut off by an act of parliament, and the title to the English throne established in the person of another.[5] This threat, however, had been so often repeated, that it produced not the slightest effect; and Elizabeth soon after recalled her ambassador, commanding him, before he left the Scottish court, to upbraid the king with his ingratitude. His farewell interview was a stormy one. His royal mistress, he said, was bitterly mortified to find that this was all the return for her care of James ever since

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, draft, Walsingham to Bowes, 31st August 1580; and same to same, August 10, 1580. Also original draft, Elizabeth to Morton, June 22, 1580; and Bowes to Walsingham, July 9, 1580. Also original draft, Walsingham to Bowes, 1st June 1580.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham and Burghley, August 31, 1580.

[3] Original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, August 30, 1580. Endorsed by Walsingham's hand, "My letter to Mr Bowes."

[4] MS., State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, September 1, 1580.

[5] State-paper Office, copy, Walsingham to Bowes, September 10, 1580

his cradle. She had little expected to be treated with contempt, and to see promoted to credit and honour the very man against whom she had expressed so much suspicion and dislike; but hereafter, he might find what it was to prefer a Duke of Lennox before a Queen of England.[1]

This retirement of Bowes greatly strengthened D'Aubigny. The young king became more attached to the interests of France; he entered into communication with his mother, the imprisoned queen;[2] and whilst the courts of Rome, Paris, and Madrid united their endeavours to procure her liberty, Lennox persuaded James to second their efforts, and to overwhelm their opponents by a mighty stroke. This was the destruction of Morton, the bitterest enemy of the Scottish queen, and whose recent intrigues with the English ambassador had shewn that, although his power was diminished, his will to work their ruin was as active as before. Their plot against him, which had been in preparation for some time, was now ripe for execution, and it was determined to arraign him as guilty of the murder of Darnley. That he had been an active agent in the conspiracy against that unhappy prince, was certain; and that Archibald Douglas, another powerful member of the house of Douglas, had been personally present at the murder, was well known; but this could be said of others who had escaped prosecution; and as to Morton, although shorn of much of his power and lustre, he was still so dreaded, that no one, for many years, had dared to whisper an accusation against him. The arrival of Lennox, however, had changed the scene; and this new favourite of his sovereign was now risen to such a height of power that, finding the late regent intriguing with Elizabeth against him, he determined to pull down and destroy his enemy at once.

For this purpose many things then assisted. Morton had quarrelled with the Kirk, and lost the confidence of its ministers; he was hated by the people for his avarice and severe exactions during his regency; and his steady adherence to England had made him odious to the friends of the imprisoned queen and the party of France. Lennox, therefore, had every hope of success; and to effect his purpose, he employed a man well calculated to cope with such an antagonist. This was James Stewart, captain of the Royal Guard, and second son of Lord Ochiltree, who had already risen into great favour with the king, and was afterwards destined to act a noted part in the history of the country. Stewart had received a learned education; and from the principles of his father, and his near connexion with Knox, who had married his sister, was probably destined for the church. But his daring and ambitious character threw him into active life: he embraced the profession of arms, served as a soldier of fortune in the wars of France and Sweden, visited Russia, and afterwards returned to his own country, where he soon won the confidence of the young king and the Duke of Lennox, by his noble presence and elegant accomplishments. Beneath these lighter attractions, however, he concealed a mind utterly reckless and licentious in its principles, confident and courageous to excess, intolerant of the opinions of other men, and unscrupulous as to the means he adopted to raise himself into power.

To this man, then only beginning to develop these qualities, was committed the bold task of arraigning Morton; and to obtain complete proof of his guilt, it was arranged that Sir James Balfour, who was believed to have in his possession the bond for Darnley's murder, and who was himself a principal assassin, should come secretly from France and exhibit this paper with Morton's signature attached to it.

In this last scene of his life, the ex-regent exhibited the hereditary pride and courage of the house of Douglas.

[1] Orig. draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, Oct. 7, 1580. The title of duke here given by Walsingham to Lennox, seems premature. Lennox was not created a duke till August 1581. See *postea*, p. 39.

[2] See Proofs and Illustrations, No. V.

He had been warned of the danger he incurred, and the storm which was about to burst over his head, two days before, when hunting with the king: but he derided it; and on the last of December, the day on which he fell into the toils, took his place, as usual, at the council table, where the king presided. After some unimportant business, the usher suddenly entered and declared that Captain James Stewart was at the door, and earnestly craved an audience. The request was immediately granted; and Stewart, advancing to the table, fell on his knees, and instantly accused Morton of the king's murder. "My duty to your highness," said he, addressing the king, "has brought me here to reveal a wickedness that has been too long obscured. It was that man," (pointing to the earl,) "now sitting at this table, a place he is unworthy to occupy, that conspired your royal father's death. Let him be committed for trial, and I shall make good my words."[1]

Amidst the amazement and confusion occasioned by this sudden and bold impeachment, the only person unmoved was Morton himself. Rising from his seat, he cast a momentary and disdainful glance upon his accuser, and then firmly regarding the king, "I know not," he said, "by whom this informer has been set on, and it were easy for one of my rank to refuse all reply to so mean a person; but I stand upon my innocence, I fear no trial. The rigour with which I have prosecuted all suspected of that murder is well known; and when I have cleared myself, it will be for your majesty to determine what they deserve who have sent this perjured tool of theirs to accuse me!" These bitter terms Stewart threw back upon the earl with equal contempt and acrimony. "It is false, utterly false," he replied, "that any one has instigated me to make this accusation. A horror for the crime, and zeal for the safety of my sovereign, have been my only counsellors; and as to his pretended zeal against the guilty, let me ask him, where has he placed Archibald Douglas his cousin? That most infamous of men, who was an actor in the tragedy, is now a senator, promoted to the highest seat of justice, and suffered to pollute that tribunal before which he ought to have been arraigned as the murderer of his prince."[2]

This scene had begun calmly; but as these last words were uttered, Stewart had sprung upon his feet, and Morton laid his hand upon his sword, when Lords Lindsay and Cathcart threw themselves between them, and prevented a personal encounter.[3] The king then commanded both to be removed; and, after a brief consultation, the justice-clerk, who sat at the council table, having declared that, on a charge of treason, the accused must instantly be warded, Morton was first shut up in the palace, and after one day's interval, committed to the castle of Edinburgh. Even there, however, he was not deemed secure from a rescue; and his enemies were not contented till they had lodged him within the strong fortress of Dumbarton, of which Lennox, his great enemy, was governor.[4]

On the same day that the ex-regent was committed, the council ordered his cousin, Archibald Douglas, to be seized; and Hume of Manderston, with a party of horse, rode furiously all night to his castle of Morham: but Douglas had escaped, a few hours before, across the English border, having received warning from his friend the Laird of Lang-Niddry, who rode two horses to death in bringing him the news.[5] Lennox and his faction, however, had made sure of their principal victim; and all was now headlong haste to hurry on his trial, and have the tragedy completed, before any interruption could be made, or any succour arrive. Yet this was not

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham and Burghley, Jan. 1, 1580-1.

[2] Spottiswood, p. 310.

[3] Harleian, 6999, fols. 3, 4, 5. Bowes to Walsingham, January 7, Berwick, 1580-1. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. VI.

[4] Calderwood, MS. Hist., British Museum, Ayscough, sub anno 1581, fol. 1115. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Randolph, January 25, 1580-1.

[5] MS., Calderwood, sub anno 1581, fol. 1116.

easily accomplished. The story of his seizure had effectually roused Elizabeth. Randolph was despatched, on the spur of the moment, to carry a violent remonstrance to the king; and Lord Hunsdon, her cousin, a proud and fiery soldier, received orders to raise the power of the north, and lead an army into Scotland.[1]

But the envoy, on his arrival at Edinburgh,[2] found it more difficult to revive a party for the delivery of Morton than he had anticipated. Matters were there in so violent a state, and the English alliance so unpopular, that he dreaded assassination; and prayed Walsingham, who had addressed him as an envoy, to vouchsafe him the name of an ambassador, if it were merely for protection, and to save him from personal violence.[3] On sounding the dispositions of the leading men, they appeared coldly affected. The Earl of Angus, indeed, Morton's nearest kinsman, was ready to peril all in the effort to save him; but he stood alone. The rest of the nobles were either banded with Lennox, or held themselves aloof, till Hunsdon's soldiers should be seen crossing, and not threatening to cross the Border, and till Randolph had begun to pay them in better coin than promises. They had been so often deceived by the artful diplomacy of the English queen,—she had already so frequently incited them to take arms, under a promise of assistance, and left them when it was too late to retreat,—that they were full of distrust and suspicion. Nor was the audience with the young king in any way more encouraging. James had been irritated on Randolph's first arrival, by his refusal to have any intercourse with his favourite Lennox;[4] and when the envoy attempted to justify himself, and offered to prove, by the production of an intercepted letter, that he was an agent of Rome and the house of Guise, and carried on a secret intelligence with the enemies of both kingdoms, the monarch answered, with much spirit, that Lennox was an honourable nobleman, his own near kinsman, and that the accusation was perfectly false. He had come from motives of affection to visit him; and as for the intercepted letter he spoke of, from the Bishop of Glasgow to the Pope, if any such existed, it was either a forgery, or a design of that prelate for Lennox's ruin. "The bishop's character," said James, "is well known; he is my declared traitor and rebel; a favourer and kinsman of the Hamiltons, the mortal foes of the house of Lennox; and no one would be more likely than Beaton to think his labour well bestowed, if, by his letters and intrigues, he might cause me to suspect and discard my kinsman, who has embraced the true religion, and is zealous for my honour and interest. On this head," he added, "the duke is anxious for the fullest investigation, and will refuse no manner of trial to justify himself from so false a slander; and as to the trial of Morton," he concluded, "my good sister cannot be more solicitous on that head than I myself. But what would she have? Can she complain that a man, accused in my own presence of the murder of my father, has been imprisoned till the evidence be collected against him? or is it reasonable to be angry because the day of trial is not fixed, when she is aware that Archibald Douglas, a principal witness, has fled into England, and that, till the Queen of England delivers him up, Morton cannot possibly be arraigned?"[5]

To all this Randolph had little to reply; and every day convinced him more deeply than the preceding, that Morton's fate was sealed. Elizabeth, indeed, had at first talked proudly and authoritatively of her determination to save him; and her ministers and soldiers borrowed her tone. Walsing-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Randolph, January 8, 1580-1.

[2] January 18, 1580-1.

[3] MS., State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, January 22, 1580-1; Sunday. He arrived in Edinburgh on Wednesday the 18th January 1580-1.

[4] MS., State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, January 22, 1580-1, Edinburgh, Sunday.

[5] MS., State-paper Office, the King of Scots and his Council's Answer to Mr Randolph. February 7, 1580-1.

ham declared to Randolph, that if a hair of Morton's head were touched, it would cost the Queen of Scots her life.[1] Hunsdon addressed to the same ambassador a blustering epistle, anticipating his speedy invasion of Scotland, and full of threats against the "petty fellows" who were about the King of Scots.[2] Leicester, whose opinion ought to have had still greater weight, expressed himself in ominous and warning words: alluding to the dreadful fate of Darnley, "Let that young king take heed," said he. "If he prove unthankful to his faithful servants so soon, he cannot long tarry in that soil. Let the speed of his predecessors be his warning."[3] Bowes declared that, if Lennox were permitted to triumph, and Morton to fall, the quarrel would be no longer about the trifles of the Borders, but the right to the crown; in which Scotland would be assisted by France and Spain, and fortified by a large party within England:[4] and the wise Burghley, in his "Directions" to Randolph, urged the necessity of immediate action, to save Scotland from the domination of a concealed Papist, (so he described Lennox,) who, whatever he might pretend to the contrary, had been permitted by the court of Rome to dissemble his religion.[5]

But this energy was short-lived, and spent itself in words. Hunsdon, after all his threats, protracted his levies; not an English soldier crossed the Border; and no decided support or supplies of money could be extracted from the caution and parsimony of the English queen; whilst, on the part of Lennox and his adherents, all was vigour and warlike preparation. The whole force of the realm was summoned to be in readiness to resist the English army. Bands of "waged soldiers" (so termed to distinguish them from the feudal militia of the country, who served without pay) were enlisted, and added to the ordinary guard about the king's person; and the three estates assembled to vote supplies for the exigencies of the expected war with England.

Before this parliament Randolph appeared and made his last great effort to bring about the deliverance of Morton, and overthrow the power of Lennox, by open negotiation and remonstrance. He spoke for two hours: insisted with much earnestness on the benefits to be derived from the friendship of his royal mistress; described, in glowing terms, the dangers to be apprehended from Lennox, whom he denounced as an agent of France and Rome; and produced an intercepted letter from the Bishop of Ross, to prove his allegations. All these exertions, however, came too late, and were utterly unsuccessful. Lennox denied the charge, and demanded the fullest investigation. The parliament promised forty thousand pounds to support the preparations against England; daily rumours of war, and whisperings of the intrigues and conspiracies which were fomented by the English diplomatist, agitated and inflamed the country; and at last, as Randolph himself described it, "every day bred a new disorder; men began to be stirring in all parts; the ambassador grew odious, his death suspected, and the court in a manner desperate."[6]

These suspicions of conspiracies were not without foundation; for, from the moment of his arrival, Randolph had kept in his eye the third article in his instructions, which was, to raise a faction against Lennox, and employ force, either in seizing his person, or putting him to death in some open attack, if more conciliatory measures failed.[7] It was hoped that in this way the party in the interest of England might secure the person of

[1] MS. State-paper Office, Walsingham to Randolph, February 9, 1580-1.

[2] Ibid., Hunsdon to Randolph, February 3, 1580-1.

[3] Ibid., Leicester to Randolph, February 15, 1580-1.

[4] Ibid., Bowes to Leicester, Berwick, March 14, 1580-1.

[5] Ibid. Directions sent to Mr Randolph, wholly in Burghley's hand, February 17, 1580-1.

[6] MS., State-paper Office, Mr Randolph's Negotiation in Scotland.

[7] MS. Instructions to Mr Randolph, January 6, 1580-1. Also Memorial for Secret Objects. Caligula, C. vi. fols. 104-6.

the young king, and remove from him those obnoxious ministers who persuaded him to throw himself into the arms of France, and to seek the liberty of the imprisoned queen. The great advocates for this plan were Sir Robert Bowes, Lord Hunsdon, Lord Huntingdon, and the Earl of Angus; but they differed somewhat as to the best mode of proceeding. Bowes seemed to have the least scruples as to employing force for the separating James from his favourite. In a letter to Walsingham or Burghley,[1] written shortly after Randolph's arrival, he informed his correspondent that the Scottish nobles were drawing to an association; and that, amid the pageants with which the king and Lennox were then recreating the court, "a strange masque might be, perhaps, seen at Holyrood," which would check the triumph of the favourite. Hunsdon, whose fiery temper on no occasion brooked much delay, recommended martial measures; and assured the English secretary that Lennox must look for his dismissal to France, or to "something worse."[2] Huntingdon, a nobleman of the highest honour in these dark times, assured Randolph, that any attempt to restore English ascendency by negotiation would be fruitless; that open war must be deprecated; and that to get out of their difficulties by "murder" would be worst of all: but he added that he could see no objection to another method, which had been already resorted to with success, and that more than once, in Scottish history. "Why may not some of the nobility, assisted by England, say to the king, 'Your Grace is young; you cannot judge for yourself, and must be rescued from this French stranger, who abuses your confidence;' and then," he added, "if Lennox resisted and took arms, let them unarm him, if they can, and let our royal mistress assist them."[3]

[1] The address is lost. MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 113. Bowes to ——, February 7, 1580-1, Berwick.

[2] Harleian, 6999, fol. 203. Hunsdon to Walsingham, February 6, 1580-1.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Huntingdon to Randolph, March 21, 1580-1.

Amidst these various and conflicting opinions, Randolph laboured busily, and with the ardour of a man in his native element; so that at last a band or association was "packed up," to use the common phrase of the times, amongst the nobles; and Bowes informed Leicester of the intentions of the conspirators, in a letter which shews, when taken in connexion with a communication addressed the day after by Walsingham to Lord Hunsdon, that the design of the nobles was to seize the person of the king, and secure, or perhaps murder, Lennox. "Albeit," said Bowes, "the levy of the forces newly assembled in Edinburgh and elsewhere, and the planting them about the king, to guard his person against suspected surprise or violence, doth greatly threaten the stay or defeat of the purposes intended, whereof I know your lordship is advertised; yet I am in good hope that, if any opportunity be found, the parties associated will, with good courage, attempt the matter." To this, Elizabeth, who knew and directed all, replied, that she would hear of no violence being offered to the king's person; but as for D'Aubigny, she could be content he were surprised, provided it could be executed when he was found separated from his young master.[4] The extent of violence or bloodshed sanctioned under this word "surprised," cannot be precisely fixed; but to those who knew the character of the Scottish nobles of those days, and none knew it better than the English queen, it conveyed, no doubt, an emphatic meaning.

The conspirators, thus encouraged, completed their arrangements. They succeeded in corrupting some of the royal household; by their connivance, forged keys for the king's private apartments were made; and they thus hoped to enter the palace, seize the young monarch, put Lennox, Argyle, and Montrose to death, and send

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, March 14, 1580-1, Bowes to Leicester. Also MS., British Museum, Harleian, 6999, fol. 479. Original draft, Walsingham to Hunsdon, March 15, 1580-1.

James to England.[1] But Lennox, when on the very point of being cut off, was saved by an unexpected discovery; and Morton, when his prison began to be cheered by the near prospect of escape, found himself more hopelessly situated than before. The chief actors in the association for his rescue were the Earls of Angus and Mar. With Angus, Randolph had arranged all in nightly meetings, held sometimes in the fields, sometimes at Dalkeith. The Laird of Whittingham, a Douglas, and brother to the noted Archibald Douglas, was a principal conspirator, and intrusted with their most secret intentions; and four confidential servants of Morton, named Fleck, or Affleck, Nesbit, Reid, and Jerdan, were principal agents in the plot, and knew all its ramifications. Lord Hunsdon, who had a high admiration of Angus, was, as we have seen, deeply implicated: his forces were in readiness to advance from Berwick into Scotland; and he only waited for the signal which was to be the news of the king's seizure, when Lennox, receiving some hint which awakened his suspicion, seized Douglas of Whittingham, threatened him with the rack, and obtained a revelation of the whole. Morton's servants, Fleck, Nesbit, Reid, and Jerdan, were instantly arrested and put to the torture. Angus was banished beyond the Spey; Randolph, whose intrigues were laid bare, fled precipitately to Berwick, after having been nearly slain by a shot fired into his study;[2] and Elizabeth, disgusted by the treachery of Whittingham, and the utter failure of the plot against Lennox, commanded Hunsdon to dismiss his forces, recalled Randolph, and abandoned Morton to his fate.[3]

This, it was now evident, could not be long averted. His enemies were powerful and clamorous against him. Captain James Stewart, the accuser of the ex-regent, had openly declared, if they by whom he had been urged to this daring enterprise did not make an end of the old tyrant, he would soon make an end of *them*.[4] The confession of Whittingham, and of Morton's confidential servants, had furnished his enemies with evidence sufficient to bring him to the scaffold;[5] and although Angus, Randolph, and Hunsdon still continued their plots, it was found impossible to carry them into execution. One by one the various earls and barons, whose assistance had been bought by Elizabeth, dropped off, and made their peace with the stronger party;[6] till at last Morton was left alone, and nothing remained to be done but to sacrifice the victim.

For this purpose Stewart, his accuser, and Montrose were commissioned to bring him from Dumbarton to the capital. In those dark days many prophetic warnings hung over ancient houses; and among the rest was one which predicted that the bloody heart, the emblem of the house of Douglas, would fall by Arran. This saying Morton affected to despise; for the Earl of Arran was dead, and the Hamiltons, his enemies, in whose family this title was hereditary, were now banished and broken men. But Stewart, his implacable foe, had recently procured from the king the gift of the vacant earldom, though the news of his promotion had never reached the captive in his prison at Dumbarton. When Morton, therefore, read the name of Arran in the commission, he started, exclaiming, "Arran! who is that? the Earl of Arran is dead."—"Not so," said the attendant; "that title is now held by Captain James Stewart."

[1] MS., Harleian, copy of the time, Randolph to Hunsdon, March 20, 1580-1.

[2] MS., State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, March 25, 1581. Randolph affects to "suspend" his judgment of the truth of all this confession of Whittingham till further trial. There seems to be little doubt that he knew all the particulars of the plot previous to the confession, and bore a principal part in arranging it.

[3] See Proofs and Illustrations, No. VII.

[4] MS., State-paper Office, January 11, 1580-1, Bowes to Lord Burghley and Sir Fr. Walsingham.

[5] MS., State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, March 25, 1581.

[6] MS., Harleian, 6999, fol. 527. Randolph to Hunsdon, Edinburgh, March 23, 1580-1.

"And is it so?" said he, the prediction flashing across his memory: "then, indeed, all is over; and I know what I must look for."[1]

Yet, although hopeless as to the result, nothing could be more calm or undaunted than the temper in which he met it. During his long imprisonment, he had expressed contrition for his sinful courses; deplored the many crimes into which ambition and the insatiable love of power had plunged him; and sought for rest in the consolations of religion, and the constant study of the Holy Scriptures. At the same time, his preparations for the worst had not prevented him from taking as active a part against his enemies as his captivity would allow.

He was brought to trial on the 1st of June, five months after his arrest; and such was still either the lingering dread of his power, or the terror of some attempt at rescue, that the whole town was in arms. Two companies of soldiers were placed at the Cross, two bands above the Tolbooth; whilst the citizens, armed also, and with another body of troops, filled the principal street, for the purpose of conducting him from his lodging to the Tolbooth, where the trial took place. His indictment contained twelve heads of accusation, or "*dittay;*" but the paper has not been preserved; and this is the less material, as the proceedings had scarcely begun, when a letter from the king was presented, commanding the jury to confine their attention solely to the most important charge, his accession to the murder of the late king, his father. On this point, absolute and direct proof might not have been easily procured; for it turned out that Sir James Balfour either did not possess, or would not produce, the bond for Darnley's murder. But Morton's own defence supplied this defect: for although he denied that he had ever procured, or given his consent to the death of Darnley, he distinctly admitted that he knew the murder was to be committed, and had concealed it; upon which confession the jury found him guilty.

The terms in which their sentence was embodied were the same as those still employed in Scotland. It declared him "convicted of counsel, concealing, and being art and part of the king's murder;" upon hearing which last words read aloud, the earl, who had maintained the greatest calmness and temper during the trial, became deeply agitated. "Art and part!" said he, with great vehemence, and striking the table repeatedly with a little baton or staff which he usually carried—"art and part! God knoweth the contrary." It is evident that he drew the distinction between an active contrivance and approval, and a passive knowledge and concealment of the plot for Darnley's assassination.

On the morning of the day on which he suffered, some of the leading ministers of the Kirk, with whom he had been much at variance on the subject of Episcopacy, breakfasted with him in the prison; and a long and interesting conference took place, of which the particulars have been preserved in a narrative drawn up by those who were present.[2] It is difficult for any one who reads this account, and who is acquainted with the dark and horrid crimes which stained the life of Morton, not to be painfully struck with the disproportion between his expressions of contrition, and his certain anticipations of immediate glory and felicity. The compunction for his many crimes—murder, tyranny, avarice, cruelty, lust, and all the sins which were the ministers of his exorbitant ambition and pride—is so slight, that we feel perplexed as to the sincerity of a repentance which seems to sit so easily. He speaks of the murder of Riccio, or, as he terms it, "the slaughter of Davie," in which he acted so prominent a part, without one expression of regret; and appears to have lost almost every recollection of his former life, in his prospect of in

[1] Spottiswood, p. 313.

[2] Bannatyne's Memorials, Bannatyne Club edition, p. 317.

stant admission into the society of the blessed. Yet all may have been, nay, let us hope all was, sincere; and whilst it is vain to speculate upon a state of mind known only to Him who sees the heart, allowance must be made for the character of an age familiar with blood; for the peculiar, and almost ultra-Calvinistic, theology of the divines who ministered to him in his last moments; and the possibility of inaccuracy in the narrative itself, which was not read over to him before his death. In speaking of the assassination of the king, he distinctly repeated his admissions made at the trial; affirming that he, in common with many others, knew that Darnley was to be cut off, but did not dare to forewarn him; and adding, that the queen was the contriver of the whole plot.

These conferences took place on the day in which he suffered; and his friends amongst the clergy had scarcely left him, when his keeper entered his room, and desired him to come forth to the scaffold. He appeared surprised, and observed that, having been so much troubled that day with worldly matters, he had hoped that one night at least would have been allowed him to have advised ripely with his God. "But, my lord," said the keeper, "they will not wait, and all things are ready."—"If it be so," answered he, "I praise God I am ready also;" and after a short prayer, he passed down to the gate of the palace to go to the scaffold. Here another interruption took place; for Arran, his mortal enemy, was waiting on the steps, and requested him to tarry till his confession, which had been made to the ministers, had been written down, and brought to him for his signature. But this reimmersion into worldly affairs he entreated to be spared. "Bethink you, my lord," said he, "that I have far other things now to advise upon. I am about to die; I must prepare for my God. Ask me not to write now; all these good men" (pointing to the ministers) "can testify what I have spoken in that matter." With this Arran professed himself satisfied: but his importunity was not at an end; for he added, that Morton must be reconciled to him before he proceeded further. To this the earl willingly agreed; observing that now was no time to reckon quarrels, and that he forgave him and all, as he himself hoped for forgiveness. He then proceeded to the scaffold, which he ascended with a firm step; and turning to the people repeated, shortly, his confession of the foreknowledge of the king's murder, only suppressing the name of his near relative, Mr Archibald Douglas. He declared that he died in the profession of the gospel as it was at that day taught and established in Scotland; and exhorted the people, if they hoped for the favour of Heaven, to hold fast the same. Mr James Lawson, one of the ministers, then prayed aloud; and during this act of devotion, Morton, who had thrown himself, with his face on the ground, before the block on which he was to suffer, was observed to be deeply affected. In his agitation, his whole frame was convulsed with sighs and sobs bursting from his bosom; and his body rebounded from the earth on which he lay along. On rising up, however, his face was calm and cheerful; he shook his friends by the hand, bidding them farewell with many expressions of kindness; and having declined to have his hands bound, knelt down and laid his neck upon the block. At this awful moment, Mr James Lawson, stooping forward to his ear, read some verses from the Scripture, which Morton repeated with a firm voice. As he pronounced the words, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" the axe descended, and the imperfect sentence died upon the lips, which quivered and were silent for ever.[1] The execution took place about four o'clock on the evening of Friday the 2d of June. It was remarked that Fernyhirst, who was known to have

[1] MS., Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1156. Morton's head was fixed on the Tolbooth, on the highest stone of the gable towards the public street. There is a fine original picture of the Regent Morton at Dalmahoy, near Edinburgh, the seat of the present Earl of Morton. It has been engraved by Lodge.

been acquainted with the murder of the king, stood in a window opposite the scaffold. He was recognised by a conspicuous feature in his dress—his large ruffles; and seemed to take delight in the spectacle. The people also remarked that Lord Seton and his two sons had taken great care to secure a good view of all that passed, by pulling down a stair which would have intercepted their view of the scaffold.[1]

On the day after Morton suffered, George Binning, a servant of Archibald Douglas, was executed for his participation in the murder of the king. The confession of this accomplice threw some additional light on this dark story. He affirmed that his master, Archibald Douglas, who was then an adherent of the Earl of Bothwell, was present at the deed, and, in his haste to leave the spot, lost one of his slippers; that, when his master came home, his clothes were full of clay and soil, occasioned, no doubt, by the explosion; and that, in retreating from the scene of the murder, he (Binning) encountered, at the foot of a narrow lane near the spot, certain "musselled men," meaning men who had disguised themselves by muffling their faces in their cloaks; one of whom, as he conjectured by his voice, was a brother of Sir James Balfour.[2]

The death of Morton was followed, as was to be expected, by the concentration of the whole power of the state in the hands of the Earl of Lennox and Captain Stewart, now Earl of Arran. This necessarily led to the revival of the influence of France, and to renewed intrigues by the friends of the Catholic faith and the supporters of the imprisoned queen. The prospects of the Protestant lords, and of the more zealous ministers of the Kirk, were proportionably overclouded; the faction in the interest of England was thrown into despair, and reports of the most gloomy kind began to circulate through the country. It was said that religion was on the point of being altered; that the king would marry a princess of the house of Lorraine; that the Duke of Guise had already written to him in the most friendly terms, and now for the first time had condescended to call him king.[3] The conduct of Lennox was calculated to confirm rather than mitigate these suspicions. He professed, indeed, an earnest desire to maintain amicable relations with England; and had written to this effect to the Earl of Leicester, warning him against Archibald Douglas, who was now in England, and laboured to embroil the two kingdoms.[4] But he had forgotten entirely his friendly professions to the Presbyterians. The ministers of the Kirk, who had congratulated themselves as the instruments of his conversion, were treated with coldness; and it was soon discovered that he had warmly espoused the king's opinions with regard to Episcopacy, and was ready to second, to his utmost ability, the efforts of the monarch for its complete establishment in his dominions.

Meanwhile the new Earl of Arran was not neglectful of his interests, and advanced rapidly in power and presumption. Soon after the execution of Morton, he appeared before the privy-council, entered into a detail of his proceedings against that nobleman, lamented the necessity he had been under of employing torture to procure evidence, and demanded and obtained an act of approval from the king, which characterised his whole conduct as honourable, and assured him that at no future period should it be called in question.[5] His next step was an act of such open profligacy, as to incense and scandalise the whole country. He lived in habits of familiar friendship with the Earl of March, and had been under deep obligations to him; but he employed the oppor-

[1] MS., Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1156.
[2] Ibid.
[3] MS., State-paper Office, B.C., Scrope to Burghley, August 18, 1581. Also B.C., same to same, September 31, 1581. Also MS., State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, Oct. 3, 1581.
[4] MS., State-paper Office, Lennox to Leicester, October 7, 1581, Lithgow.
[5] Original Record of Privy-council, in the Register-house, Edinburgh, June 3, 1581.

tunities such intimacy gave him to seduce the affections of the Countess of March, a woman of great beauty; and so completely succeeded in depraving her mind, that she brought an action of divorce against her husband, on a ground which, in this day, none but the most abandoned could plead. The suit was successful, the decree of divorce pronounced, and Arran married the countess, whose situation at that moment proclaimed her either a liar or an adulteress. It affords a shocking picture of the manners of the times, that the young king appears to have countenanced this proceeding. Nor was this all. James determined to grant new honours to those who had assisted him in the overthrow of Morton: Lennox was made a duke;[1] Captain Stewart, who had already received a gift of the earldom of Arran, was invested in that dignity with great solemnity; the Earl of March received the earldom of Orkney; Lord Ruthven that of Gowrie; and Lord Maxwell, one of the most powerful nobles of that time, became Earl of Morton.

Parliament now assembled, and the sanction of this supreme court was given to all those measures lately passed in favour of Lennox and Arran. Indeed, it could scarcely be expected that any would dare to oppose them; for James had sent intimation to the Earls of Mar, Eglinton, and Glencairn, with the Lords Lindsay, Boyd, Herries, and Ochiltree, that he would dispense with their presence on this occasion;[2] and none, probably, attended but those who were favourable to the court. The adherents of the late Earl of Morton were pronounced rebels, and their estates confiscated. Amongst these, the principal were the Earl of Angus, Archibald Douglas of Whittingham, James Douglas, prior of Pluscardine, and James Douglas of Pittendreich, two natural sons of the Regent Morton; Douglas of Parkhead, and Archibald Douglas, constable of the castle of Edinburgh. In the same parliament, Lennox, who believed his influence now to be all-powerful, exerted himself to procure the pardon of Sir James Balfour, who had recently done him good service in the overthrow of Morton. But he was disappointed; for James refused his request, and pointed to those acts of parliament by which it was declared that no person guilty of the king his father's murder, should ever be restored.[3] At the same meeting of the estates, the statutes were confirmed which protected the Reformed religion; some enactments were introduced for the regulation of the coinage, against the exportation of wool, and other acts directed against that excess in apparel amongst the middle and lower classes, and expensive and superfluous banquets, which marked the progress of the country in wealth and refinement, and had excited the jealousy of the higher nobility.

It is now necessary to turn for a moment to the Scottish queen in her imprisonment. It was a miserable circumstance in the fate of this unfortunate princess, that any successes of her friends generally brought along with them an increase of rigour and jealousy upon the part of her inexorable rival. This increase, on the other hand, as surely led to more determined efforts for her delivery; and thus during the thirteen years for which she had now continued a captive, her health had been shattered, and her spirits broken, by those alternations of hope and fear,—those fluctuations of ardent expectation, or bitter disappointment, which must have destroyed even the healthiest and most buoyant constitution. Her condition about this time was so feeble, that she had lost the use of her limbs, and was carried in a chair or litter, by her servants. She besought Elizabeth, in pathetic terms, for the favour of a coach, that she might enjoy a drive in the park of Sheffield castle, where she was con-

[1] Douglas, vol. ii. p. 99. Moyse's Memoirs, p. 34, Bannatyne edition. MS., Calderwood, fol. 1156, states he was proclaimed duke on the 27th August 1581.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, October 18, 1581.

[3] MS., State-paper Office, B.C., Thomas Selby to Mr Thomas Foster, November 29, 1581.

fined; she requested the additional attendance of two female servants and two men-servants, which her sickness demanded; and she entreated to have passports for the Lady Lethington and Lord Seton, in whose society she might find some alleviation of her solitude. But, although Castelnau, the French ambassador, seconded these requests by the most earnest remonstrance, the English queen was deaf to his entreaties, and resisted the application.[1]

This cold and unrelenting conduct could not fail to make a deep impression upon Mary; and, in a moment of resentment and excitation, she had determined to resign her rights as Queen of Scots, and her claims upon the crown of England, into the hands of her son, with an earnest hope that he would invade that realm, and, assisted by the Roman Catholic party abroad, and Elizabeth's discontented subjects at home, establish his rights, and overwhelm her oppressor. But the return of calmer consideration shewed the madness of such a scheme; and her anxiety for the amicable recognition of the rights of her son to the English crown, banished the suggestions of personal resentment. In a memorial presented by Mary about this time to Elizabeth and her parliament, she requested to be heard, by deputies whom she would appoint, upon the subject of her title and pretensions.[2] It was not, she added, on her own account that she suggested this. Continued affliction had brought on a premature age; sorrow had extinguished ambition; and, with her shattered frame, it would be ridiculous to expect to survive Elizabeth. But she felt the natural anxiety of a mother to secure the rights of her child: and she entreated her sister of England to agree to her petition, and to recognise the undoubted title of her son, as the most certain means of promoting settled peace, and securing their mutual security.

[1] Addition aux Mem. de Castelnau, p. 519. Chalmers's Life of Mary, vol. i. pp. 384, 388.

[2] Murdin, p. 367

This sensible memorial experienced the same fate as her former petition: it made no impression upon the Queen of England, or her ministers; and Mary, defeated in her moderate desires, was compelled to embrace more determined measures, and to throw herself entirely into the arms of France. This led to a new project, known by the name of "The Association," and which appears to have originated about this time. It was proposed to the young king that, in order to have his title to the Scottish throne recognised by the powers of Europe, none of whom, with the exception of England, had yet publicly given him the name of king, he should resign the crown to his mother, under the condition that she should retransmit it to him, and retire from all the active duties of the government. But before pursuing this scheme, which led ultimately to important consequences, it is necessary to attend to the state of the Church, and its violent collision with the crown.

The struggle between Episcopacy, which had been originally established at the time of the Reformation, and the Presbyterian form of church government, was now assuming every day a more determined and obstinate form. The young king, with his ministers and favourites, Lennox and Arran, and a large proportion of the nobility, supported Episcopacy. The ministers of the Kirk, and the great body of the burghers, and middle and lower classes of the people, were zealously attached to the Presbyterian model; and considered the office of a bishop as antiscriptural, and a remnant of Popery. In a General Assembly, held some time previous to this, the "Platform" of ecclesiastical government, drawn up by Andrew Melvil, had been ratified by a majority of the ministers, and received the solemn sanction of the Church, under the title of "The Second Book of Discipline."[3] Under these conflicting circumstances, the Duke of Lennox, whose influence with the

[3] Calderwood's History, pp. 97, 102, convened April 20, 1581. Confessions of Faith, vol. ii. p. 807.

young king gave him an almost absolute power in the disposal of patronage, appointed Mr Robert Montgomery to the vacant bishopric of Glasgow. It was notorious to all, that this was a collusive and simoniacal transaction; for Montgomery resigned the temporalities of the see to the duke, and was contented to receive a small annual stipend out of its revenues. But the clergy, at first waving this objection, pronounced a high censure upon Montgomery, and interdicted him from accepting a bishopric. He remonstrated, and was supported by the king and his council, who contended that, as Episcopacy had never been abolished by the three estates, no illegal act had been committed.

The General Assembly of the Church soon after was convened in the capital; and as some private intelligence had been sent to Scotland of the intended "Association" between the imprisoned queen and the king her son, this ecclesiastical convention met in a state of much excitement.[1] It was known that various missionary priests were covertly intriguing in the country; that George Douglas had arrived on a mission from France, charged with secret despatches from the Bishops of Glasgow and Ross, her agents in that realm; and great dread was entertained of Lennox's increasing influence over the mind of the young king. Determined measures, therefore, were adopted by the Church. Articles against Montgomery were drawn up, which condemned, in strong terms, his life, conversation, and opinions; and although, upon investigation, many faults objected to him turned out to be frivolous and unfounded, other matters were proved, which, it was contended, utterly incapacitated him for the office which he had accepted. He received an injunction, therefore, to continue in his ministry at Stirling; and, under pain of the highest censures, to abandon all thoughts of the bishopric.

During these transactions, Elizabeth, who had become alarmed on the subject of Scotland, and dreaded the preponderating influence of Lennox and Arran, despatched Captain Nicolas Arrington, an able officer of the garrison at Berwick, on a mission into that country. He was instructed to use his utmost efforts to persuade the king to continue in amicable relations with England; to sow, if possible, by some secret practice, a division between the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Arran; and to expose the devices of France and Spain for the overthrow of religion, and the resumption of power by the Scottish queen.[2] It had been the advice of Sir Robert Bowes, in a letter addressed to Burghley, that every means should be adopted to increase some jealousies which, owing to the pride and intolerance of Arran, had arisen between him and the duke. But after every effort to "blow the coals,"[3] as he expressed it, these proud rivals became convinced that their safest policy was to forget their differences, and unite against their common enemies. A reconcilement, accordingly, took place;[4] and Lennox, strong in the continued attachment of the king, and the new friendship of Arran, determined to concentrate his whole strength against that faction of the Kirk which opposed themselves to Episcopacy, and had threatened his bishop with deposition.

At this moment secret information of a threatening nature arrived from France. The reports regarding the progress of "The Association" between the queen-mother and her son were confirmed. It was said that Lord Arbroath, the head of the great house of Hamilton, now in banishment, was to be restored by French influence, under the condition that the "mass" should return along with him; and Mr John Durie, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, sounded a fearful note of alarm, in a sermon which he delivered in the High Church of the city. The king, he said, had

[1] Calderwood, p. 118.

[2] State-paper Office, October 26, 1581, Instructions for N. Arrington, sent into Scotland. Copy.

[3] MS., State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, October 18, 1581.

[4] Historie of James the Sext, p. 186.

been moved by certain courtiers, who now ruled all at their will, to send a private message to the King of France and the Duke of Guise, and to seek his mother's blessing. He knew this, he declared, from the very man who was employed in the message—George Douglas, Mary's sworn servant; and he painted in strong colours the deplorable effects which might be anticipated from such a coalition. It was proposed, in these dark counsels, that the king should resign the crown to his mother, and she convey it again to him, with an assurance that he should then be acknowledged as king by France, and by the powers of Europe, which, up to this time, had refused him the royal title. And what must inevitably follow from all this? If the transaction were completed, it would be argued that the establishment of religion, and all other public transactions since the coronation, were null; that the king's friends were traitors, and their adversaries his only true subjects. After the sermon, a remarkable conference took place between the Earls of Argyle and Gowrie, and the ministers, Durie, Lawson, and Davison, in the council-house. On being pressed as to the French intrigues, Argyle confessed that he had gone too far; but affirmed that, if he saw anything intended against religion, he would forsake his friends, and oppose it to his utmost. To Gowrie, Davison, the minister of Libberton, in alluding to the murder of Riccio, used a still stronger argument. "If things," said he, "go forward as they are intended, your head, my lord, will pay for Davie's slaughter. But Scottish nobles now are utterly unworthy of the place they hold: they would not, in other times, have suffered the king to lie alone at Dalkeith with a stranger, whilst the whole realm is going to confusion; and yet the matter," they significantly added, "might be reformed well enough with quietness, if the noblemen would do their duty."[1]

Nor were these warnings and denunciations confined to the nobility. The young king, when sitting in his private chamber in the palace of Stirling, received an admonition quite as solemn as any delivered to his subjects. Mr John Davison, along with Duncanson the royal chaplain, and Mr Peter Young, entered the apartment; and Davison, after pointing out the dreadful state of the country, exhorted him to put away those evil counsellors who were so fast bringing ruin upon the commonweal and his own soul. "My liege," said he, "at this present there are three jewels in this realm precious to all good men—Religion, the Commonweal, and your Grace's person. Into what a horrible confusion the two first have fallen, all men are witness; but as to the third, your grace hath need to beware, not only of the common hypocrites and flatterers, but more especially of two sorts of men. First, such as opposed themselves to your grace in your minority: whereby they have committed offences for which they must yet answer to the laws; and, therefore, must needs fear the king. Remember the saying, '*Multis terribilis, caveto multos.*' The second sort are those who are conjured enemies to religion. If," he concluded, "your grace would call to you such godly men as I could name, they would soon shew you whom they think to be included in these two ranks." It had been arranged beforehand that, should the young king exhibit any desire to profit by this counsel, Davison was to name the Lairds of Dun, Lundie, and Braid, with Mr Robert Pont and Mr James Lawson, two of the leading ministers; but James, after hearing the exordium, and observing hurriedly that it was good counsel, started off from the subject, and broke up the interview.[2]

These scenes of alarm and admonition were followed by a violent attempt of Montgomery to possess himself of the bishopric, in which he entered the church at Glasgow, accompanied by a band of the royal guard, and in virtue of a charge ad-

[1] MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1172.

[2] MS., Calderwood, British Museum, fol. 1172.

dressed by the king to that presbytery, endeavoured to expel the established minister from the pulpit, and to occupy his place. This was resisted by the Kirk; and the ministers of the presbytery of Glasgow were in consequence summoned before the council;[1] but they defended themselves with the greatest courage, and when pressed by the king, declined the judgment of the sovereign or his judges in a matter not of a civil but of a purely spiritual nature. Lawson, Durie, Andrew Hay, and a large body of the ministers and elders from Edinburgh, Dalkeith, and Linlithgow, accompanied them to Stirling; and when the king insisted that they should receive Montgomery, and warned them of the fatal consequences of a refusal, he was boldly reminded by Durie, that such intemperate proceedings would only lead to the excommunication of the man whom he favoured.[2] This threat, and the preparations for carrying it into immediate execution, alarmed the object of the quarrel himself; and the submission of Montgomery to the jurisdiction and sentence of the Kirk, led to a temporary cessation of the controversy.

This lull, however, proved exceeding brief, and was soon followed by a more determined collision between the antagonist principles of Presbyterianism and Episcopacy. The Kirk at this time possessed, amongst its ministers, some men of distinguished learning, and of the greatest courage: Durie, Lawson, Craig, Lindsay, Andrew Melvil, Thomas Smeton, Pont, Davison, and many others, presided over its councils, and formed a spiritual conclave which, in the infallibility they claimed, and the obedience they demanded, was a hierarchy in everything but the name. Eloquent, intrepid, and indefatigable, they had gained the affections of the lower classes of the people, and were supported also by the increasing influence of the burghs and the commercial classes. Animated by such feelings, wielding such powers, and backed by such an influence, it was not to be expected that they would be easily put down. The great cause of Episcopacy, on the other hand, was supported by the young king, who was himself no contemptible theologian, by the Duke of Lennox, the Earl of Arran, and a large portion of the old nobility. Abroad, it looked to the sympathy and assistance of France; and as the whole hopes of the imprisoned queen, and the great body of the Roman Catholics in England, rested on Lennox and his friends, they were inclined to strengthen his hands in every possible way. The power of this party had recently been shewn by the destruction of Morton, which they carried through with a high hand, against the whole influence of England and the Kirk; and, flushed by this success, they resolved to renew the battle with the Presbyterian party, in the case of the Bishop of Glasgow, which, however insulated or insignificant it might appear at first sight, really involved the establishment or destruction of Episcopacy. Montgomery, a weak man, and wholly under the influence of Lennox, was easily persuaded to retract his submission, and repeat his attempts to possess himself of the bishopric; whilst at this moment the feelings of the ministers were goaded to the highest pitch of jealousy and resentment, by the arrival of a messenger from the Duke of Guise: ostensibly, he came with a present of horses to the king; but it was suspected that more was intended than mere courtesy. The person who brought this gift was Signor Paul, the duke's master-stabler, and, as was asserted, one of the most active and remorseless murderers at the massacre of St Bartholomew.[3] It was

[1] April 13, 1582.

[2] Calderwood MS., fol. 1174. Montgomery, incensed against Andrew Hay, one of the ministers, threatened to bring him to justice, as art and part in foreknowing and concealing the late king's murder. The only ground of the charge was that Mr Andrew Hay was uncle to the Laird of Tallo, (Hay,) who was executed for the murder.

[3] MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1189, "This Seignor Paul was a famous murtherer at the massacre at Paris. No fitter man could be sent to make pastime to the king."

scarcely to be expected that this should be tamely borne; and John Durie, the minister of Edinburgh, instantly rode to Kinneil, Arran's castle, where the king had determined to receive Guise's envoy. Meeting Signor Paul in the garden, the minister hastily drew his cap over his eyes, declaring he would not pollute them by looking on the devil's ambassador; and turning to the king, rebuked him sharply for receiving gifts from so odious a quarter. "Is it with the Guise," said he, "that your grace will interchange presents; with that cruel murderer of the saints? Beware, my liege, I implore you," he continued, "beware with whom you ally yourself in marriage; and remember John Knox's last words unto your highness; remember that good man's warning, that so long as you maintained God's holy gospel, and kept your body unpolluted, you would prosper. Listen not, then, to those ambassadors of the devil, who are sent hither to allure you from your religion."[1] To this indignant sally, James, overawed by the vehement tone of the remonstrant, quietly answered, "that his body was pure; and that he would have no woman for his wife who did not fear God and love the Evangell."[2]

From Kinneil, Durie returned to Edinburgh, where his zeal flamed up to the highest pitch; and, transforming the pulpit, as was the practice of those times, into a political rostrum for the discussion of the measures of the government, he exposed the intrigues of Lennox, the schemes of the queen-mother, and the profligacy of the court, in such cutting and indignant terms, that he was immediately summoned before the council, and ordered to quit the city.[3] The strictest injunctions, at the same time, were directed to the provost and magistrates to carry this sentence of banishment into execution under pain of treason.[4] Lennox's party, at this moment, was described by the Laird of Carmichael, (a Scottish gentleman employed to transmit secret information to Walsingham,) as guiding all at court. Its ranks, as he informed the English secretary, embraced Arran, a great persecutor of the preachers, Huntly, Seton, Ogilvy, the Prior Maitland, (this was the younger brother of the famous Secretary Lethington,) Balfour, Robert Melvil, Mr David Makgill, and one Mr Henry Keir. These, he added, were all Papists.[5] But Carmichael himself, probably a rigid Presbyterian, was little disposed to make any distinction between those who supported Episcopacy, and the friends of the Church of Rome. Yet it must be remembered that the reported intrigues between the court of Spain and the duke, with the secret negotiations of the Jesuits for the association of the queen-mother with her son in the government, gave him no little countenance in the assertion; and the vigour with which Lennox pushed forward his measures against the Kirk, seemed to indicate a very formidable combination of forces. Undismayed, however, by the attack of their adversaries, the party of the Kirk only roused themselves to a more determined opposition, retaliated, by excommunicating Montgomery, and called upon the people to weep for their sins, and be prepared to peril all, rather than part with their religion. The country, at this moment, must have presented an extraordinary picture: the pulpits rang with alternate strains of lamentation and defiance. Patrick Simpson, alluding to the fate of Durie, declared that the principal link in the golden chain of the ministry was already broken. Davison, a firmer spirit, whose small figure and undaunted courage had procured him from Lennox the *sobriquet* of the "*petit diable*," exhorted his auditors to take courage, for God would dash the devil in his own devices; and, on the 27th of

[1] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1189, and MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Woddrington to Walsingham, Berwick, May 15, 1582. The interview between Durie and the king at Kinneil took place on the 11th May., MS., Calderwood.

[2] Ibid., MS., Calderwood, fol. 1189.

[3] See Proofs and Illustrations, No. VIII.

[4] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1189, May 30, 1582.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, June 1, 1582, Laird of Carmichael to Walsingham.

June, an extraordinary Assembly of the Church was convened in the capital, to meet the crisis which, in the language of the times, threatened destruction to their Zion.[1]

The proceedings were opened by a remarkable sermon, or lecture, which Andrew Melvil delivered from the pulpit of the New Kirk. He chose for its subject the fourth chapter of the First Epistle to Timothy; and, in speaking of the fearful trials and heresies of the "latter days," inveighed, in no gentle terms, against the audacious proceedings of the court. The weapon now raised against them, he described as the "bloody gully[2] of absolute power. And whence," said he, "came this gully? From the Pope. And against whom was it used? Against Christ himself: from whose Divine head these daring and wicked men would fain pluck the crown, and from whose hands they would wrench the sceptre." These might be deemed strong expressions, he added, but did not every day verify his words, and give new ground for alarm? "Need he point out to them the king's intended demission of the crown to his mother? Was not the palpable object of this scheme, which had been concocting these eight years past, the resumption of her lost power, and with it the re-establishment of her idolatrous worship? Who were its authors? Beaton, bishop of Glasgow, and Lesley, bishop of Ross. And by what devices did this last-named prelate explain their intentions to the imprisoned princess? To the letters which he sent, he had added a painting of a queen, with a little boy kneeling at her feet and imploring her blessing; whilst she extended one hand to her son, and with the other pointed to his ancestors, as if she exhorted him to walk in their footsteps, and follow their faith."[3]

At this Assembly, it was warmly debated whether Durie was bound to obey the sentence of banishment, a point upon which opinions were much divided. The provost and magistrates contended that they must execute the law which had pronounced the sentence, or become themselves amenable to its penalties. One party of the ministers, taking a middle course, advised that two of their brethren, Mr David Ferguson and Mr Thomas Buchanan, should be sent to remonstrate with the king. But from this the fiery Davison loudly dissented. "Ye talk," said he, "of replacing John Durie. Will ye become suppliants for reinstating him whom the king had no power to displace, albeit his foolish flock have yielded?" At this, Sir James Balfour started to his feet, and fixed his eyes sternly on the speaker. Balfour was notorious as one of the murderers of Darnley; yet having been acquitted of that crime by a packed jury, he had resumed his functions as an elder of the Kirk.[4] Such a man was not likely to overawe the bold minister; and he undauntedly continued:—"Tell me what flesh may or can displace the great King's ambassador, so long as he keeps within the bounds of his commission?" Saying this, he left the Assembly in great heat, perceiving that the question would be carried against him, which accordingly happened; for, on the resumption of the debate, it was determined that Durie should submit, if the magistrates, who belonged to his flock, insisted. They did so: and that very evening, he was charged not only to depart from the town, but not to reside within the freedom and bounds of the city.[5] About nine o'clock the same night he was seen taking his way through the principal street of the city, accompanied by two notaries, and a small band of his brethren, among whom were Lawson, Balcanquel, and Davison. On reaching the Market Cross, he directed the notaries to read a written protestation, in which he attested the sincerity of his life and doctrine; and declared that, although

[1] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1189-1192.

[2] Gully: a large knife; a sword, or weapon.

[3] MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1192, June 27, 1582.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Scrope to Burghley, August 18, 1581.

[5] MS., Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1195, 1196.

he obeyed the sentence of banishment, no mortal power should prevent him from preaching the Word.[1] Upon this, placing a piece of money in the hands of the notaries, he took instruments, as it was termed; and during the ceremony, Davison, who stood by his side, broke into threats and lamentation. "I too must take instruments," cried he; "and this, I protest, is the most sorrowful sight these eyes ever rested on; a shepherd removed by his own flock, to pleasure flesh and blood, and because he has spoken the truth. But plague, and fearful judgments, will yet light on the inventors." All this, however, passed away quietly, except on the part of the speakers; and the denunciations of the minister appear to have met with little sympathy. A shoemaker's wife in the crowd cried out, if any would cast stones at him, she would help.[2] A bystander, also, was heard to whisper to his neighbour, looking with scorn on the two protesters, "If I durst, I would take instruments that ye are both knaves."[3]

Shortly before this, a conference had been held at Stirling, between the commissioners of the court and the Kirk, which had concluded by the king directing the ministers to present him with a list of the grievances of which they complained. They accordingly prepared their "Articles," which, in bold and unequivocal language, drew the distinction between the obedience they owed to the king and the submission that was due to the Kirk. They complained that the monarch, by advice of evil counsellors, had taken upon him that spiritual authority which belonged to Christ alone, as the King and Head of His Church; and, as examples of this unwarrantable usurpation, appealed to the late banishment of Durie, the maintaining an excommunicated bishop, the interdicting the General Assembly from the exercise of their undoubted spiritual rights, and the evil handling of the brethren of Glasgow for doing their duty in the case of Montgomery.[4]

The presentation of these Articles was intrusted to a committee of the ministers. It embraced Pont, Lawson, Smeton, Lindsay, Hay, Polwart, Blackburn, Galloway, Christison, Ferguson, James Melvil, Buchanan, Brand, Gillespie, Duncanson the minister of the king's household, and Andrew Melvil principal of the new College at St Andrews. To these a single layman was added in the person of Erskine of Dun, a name much venerated in the history of the Kirk. It had been agreed that these "Griefs" should be presented to the king in the beginning of July; and on the 6th of that month this intrepid band of ministers set out for Perth, where James then held his court. Their adversaries had in vain made many exertions to intimidate them; and secret information had been sent by Sir James Melvil, to his relative Andrew Melvil, that his life was in danger; but he only thanked God that he was not feeble in the cause of Christ, and proceeded forward with his brethren. On being ushered into the presence-chamber, they found Lennox and Arran with the king; and laid their remonstrance on the table. Arran took it up, glanced his eye over it, and furiously demanded, "Who dares sign these treasonable Articles?"—"We dare," responded Andrew Melvil, "and will render our lives in the cause." As he said this, he came forward to the council-table, took the pen, subscribed his name, and was followed by all his brethren. The two nobles were intimidated by this unlooked-for courage: the king was silent; and, after some conference, the ministers were dismissed in peace.[5]

It would have been well for Lennox and Arran had they taken warning from these symptoms of determined opposition; but they underrated the influence of the ministers,

[1] MS., Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1196.

[2] Ibid. This same woman had troubled the Kirk much in Morton's time. Her name was Urquhart.

[3] Calderwood, MS. Hist., fol. 1196.

[4] MS., State-paper Office, Advertisements from Scotland, 22d June 1582. MS., Calderwood, fol. 1198, 1199.

[5] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1200, 1201.

and were not aware that, at this moment, a strong party of the nobility was forming against them. It was fostered by the Kirk, and encouraged by England; whilst its leaders, as usual in such enterprises, appear about this time to have drawn up a written contract, which declared the purposes for which they had leagued together. This paper was entitled the "Form of the Band, made among the noblemen that is enterprised against Dobany;"[1] and it described, in strong language, the causes which had led to the association. These were said to be, the dangers incurred by the professors of God's true religion; the intended overthrow of the gospel, by godless men, who had crept into credit with the king's majesty; the perversion of the laws; the wreck of the ancient nobility and the ministers of religion; the interruption of the amity with England; and the imminent peril of the king's person, unless some remedy were speedily adopted. "Wherefore," it continued, "we have sworn, in God's presence, and engaged, by this 'band,' to punish and remove the authors of these intended evils, and to re-establish justice and good order, as we shall answer to the Eternal God, and upon our honour, faith, and truth."[2] The original of this important paper has not been preserved, and the names of the associators do not appear in the copy; but we may pronounce them, from the evidence of other letters, to have been the Earls of Gowrie, Mar, Glencairn, Argyle, Montrose, Eglinton, and Rothes, with the Lords Lindsay, Boyd, and many others.[3] The principal enemies to Lennox among the ministers, were Lawson, Lindsay, Hay, Smeton, Polwart, and Andrew Melvil.[4]

At the time this band was formed, its authors had not fixed upon any precise mode of attack; but the events which now occurred brought their measures to a head, and compelled them to act upon the offensive.

Shortly previous to the interview of the ministers with the king at Perth, Montgomery had been reinstated in the bishopric of Glasgow by the royal command; and the sentence of excommunication pronounced upon him by the Kirk was reversed, and declared null. To soften, at the same time, the effect of this strong measure of defiance, the king, by a public proclamation, renounced all intention of making any changes in religion; and Montgomery, confiding in his restored honours, ventured from his seclusion at Dalkeith, where he had resided with his patron Lennox, and once more shewed himself in Edinburgh. But Lawson, one of the leading ministers, flew to the magistrates, accused them of permitting an excommunicated traitor to walk the streets, and compelled them to discharge him from their city.[5] As he departed, Montgomery threatened that within half an hour they should change their tone; and within a brief space returned with a royal proclamation, which was read at the Cross, commanding all men to accept him as a true Christian and good subject. He brought also letters to the same purport, which were sent to the lords of session. All, however, was in vain, so strong was the popular current against him. The provost, in an agony of doubt between his duty to the king and his allegiance to the Kirk, imprecated vengeance upon his head, and declared he would have given a thousand merks he had never seen his face. The judges refused to hear him: and a report arising that he should be again expelled, an immense crowd assembled. Tradesmen, armed with bludgeons, and women with stones, waited round the door of the court; and their expected victim would probably have been torn in pieces, had he not been smuggled away by the magistrates through a narrow lane called the Kirk Heugh, which led to the Potterrow gate. His

[1] Caligula, C. vii. fol. 14, British Museum. A copy. Dobany is D'Aubigny, the Duke of Lennox.

[2] Ibid. See also MS., Calderwood, p. 1210.

[3] Ibid., fol. 18, MS. Letter, Woddrington to Walsingham, 19th July 1582, Berwick.

[4] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1201.

[5] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1198, 1201. July 2, 1582, and July 24.

retreat, however, became known; the people broke in upon him with many abusive terms. False traitor! thief! man-sworn carle! were bandied from mouth to mouth; and as he sprang through the wicket, he received some smart blows upon the back. So little sympathy did he meet with from the king, that, when the story reached the court at Perth, James threw himself down upon the Inch, and, calling him a seditious loon, fell into convulsions of laughter.[1]

The effect, however, was different upon Lennox. His penetration did not enable him to see the formidable strength which was gradually arraying itself against him; and his blind obstinacy only hurried on the catastrophe. At the instigation of France,[2] he determined, by a sudden attack, to overwhelm his enemies; and, assisted by the force which himself and Arran could command, to seize the Earls of Gowrie, Mar, and Glencairn, with Lindsay, and the chief of the Protestant nobles. Having achieved this, and banished the leading ministers of the Kirk, he looked forward to a triumphant conclusion of his labours in the establishment of Episcopacy, and the association of the imprisoned queen with the government of her son. Bowes, however, the English ambassador, became acquainted with these intentions, and informed the Protestant lords of the plot for their destruction. The minuteness of the information which this veteran diplomatist elicited by his pensioned informers, is remarkable.[3] He assured Gowrie and his friends that they must look to themselves, or be content soon to change a prison for a scaffold; that he had certain intelligence the king had consented to arraign them of a conspiracy against his person: and they knew that, if convicted of treason, their fate was sealed. It was by Walsingham's orders that Bowes made this communication, in the hope that it would rouse the enemies of Lennox to immediate exertion; nor was he disappointed.[4] Appalled by the news, and aware that even a brief delay might sweep them over the precipice on which they stood, they felt the necessity of acting upon the moment. The only danger to be dreaded was in prematurely exploding the mine already in preparation, and thus risking a failure. The band or contract, as we have seen, had been drawn up; but it was still unsigned by many of the nobility. There was scarcely time to concentrate all their forces; and although they made sure of the approval of the ministers of the Kirk, who had already cordially co-operated with them in all their efforts against Lennox, still these ecclesiastical associates were now scattered in different parts of the country, and could not be individually consulted. On the other hand, the danger was imminent; and if they acted instantly, some circumstances promised success. The young king was at Perth, separated both from Lennox and Arran.[5] He had resorted to that country to enjoy his favourite pastime of the chase; his court was few in number; Gowrie, Glammis, and Lindsay, three of the chief conspirators, were all-powerful in the neighbourhood of Perth; and should they delay, as had been intended, till the king removed to the capital, it would become more difficult, if not impossible, to execute their design. In this state of uncertainty, they received intelligence which made them more than suspect that Lennox had discovered their conspiracy.[6] This settled the question: and having once decided on action, their proceedings were as bold as they had before been

1 MS., Calderwood, fol. 1202.

2 Sir R. Bowes to Secretary Walsingham, August 15, 1582, original draft. From the original Letter-book of Sir Robert Bowes, kindly communicated to me by my friend Sir Cuthbert Sharp.

3 See Proofs and Illustrations, No. IX.

4 Original draft, Sir Robert Bowes to Walsingham, August 25, 1582, Bowes' Letter-book. See also Woddrington to Walsingham, July 19, 1582, Caligula, C. vii.

5 Wednesday, August 22. Lennox was then at Dalkeith, Arran at Kinneil,—the first place six miles, the second eighteen miles from Edinburgh.

6 MS. Letter, Sir George Bowes to Walsingham, August 26, 1572, Bowes' Letter-book. Melvil's Memoirs, pp. 277, 281.

dilatory. In an incredibly short time, Gowrie, Mar, Lindsay, the Master of Glammis, and their associates, assembled a thousand men, and surrounded Ruthven castle, where the king then lay. It was Gowrie's own seat; and James, who, it appears, had no suspicion of the toils laid for him, had accepted the invitation of its master, thinking only of his rural sports. To his astonishment, the Earls of Mar and Gowrie entered his presence, removed his guards, presented a list of their grievances, and, whilst they professed the utmost fidelity to his person, took special care that all possibility of escape was cut off. Meanwhile the intelligence flew to Arran that the king was captive; and he and Colonel Stewart, his brother, set off in fiery speed at the head of a party of horse. Their attempt at rescue was, however, too late; for Colonel Stewart was attacked and defeated by Mar and Lochleven, who threw themselves upon him from an ambush, where they had watched his approach; whilst Arran, who had galloped by a nearer way to Ruthven, was seized the moment he entered the castle court, and confined under a guard. All this had passed with such rapidity, and the lords who surrounded the king treated him with so much respect, that James deluded himself with the hope that he might still be a free monarch. But next morning dispelled the illusion. As he prepared to take horse, the Master of Glammis intimated to him that the lords who were now with him deemed it safer for his grace to remain at Ruthven. James declared he would go that instant, and was about to leave the chamber, when this baron rudely interposed, and placing his leg before the king, so as to intercept the doorway, commanded him to remain. The indignity drew tears from the young monarch, and some of the associated lords remonstrated with Glammis; but he sternly answered, "Better bairns[1] greet, than bearded men;" a speech which his royal master never afterwards forgot or forgave.[2]

But although thus far successful, the actors in this violent and treasonable enterprise were in a dangerous predicament. Gowrie, Mar, Glammis, and Lindsay were indeed all assured of each other, and convinced that they must stand or fall together; but the band or covenant which, according to the practice of the times, should have secured the assistance of their associates, was still unsigned by a great majority of the most powerful nobles and barons, on whose assistance they had calculated. On the other hand, the Duke of Lennox could reckon on the support of the Earls of Huntly, Sutherland, Morton, Orkney, Crawford, and Bothwell; besides Lords Herries, Seton, Hume, Sir Thomas Kerr of Fernyhirst, Sir James Balfour, the Abbot of Newbottle, and many inferior barons; whilst the Earls of Caithness, March, and Marshal professed neutrality.[3] This array of opposition was sufficiently appalling; and for a brief season the enterprisers of the "raid"[4] of Ruthven (as it was called) began to waver and tremble;[5] but a moment's consideration convinced them that, if there was danger in advance, there was infinitely greater in delay. They were already guilty of treason; they had laid violent hands on the king's person; had defied Lennox, imprisoned Arran, outraged the laws, and raised against them the feelings, not only of their opponents, but of all good citizens. If they drew back, ruin was inevitable. If they went forward, although the peril was great, the struggle might yet end triumphantly. They had the young king in their hands, and could work upon his timidity and inexperience, by menacing his life; they had possession of Arran also, a man whom

[1] Bairns, children; greet, weep.

[2] MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4737, fol. 682, 683. Spottiswood, p. 320.

[3] State-paper Office, Names of the noblemen and lords that as yet stand with the duke, September 5, 1582.

[4] Raid, a Scottish word; meaning a forcible inroad, or invasion.

[5] MS., Caligula, C. vii. fol. 23, Sir George Carey to Burghley, September 5, 1582.

they dreaded far more than the gentler and vacillating Lennox; they were certain of the active support of the ministers of the Kirk; and Bowes and Walsingham had already assured them of the warm approval, and, if necessary, the assistance of England. All this was encouraging; and they determined, at every risk, to press on resolutely in the revolution which they had begun.

In the meantime, whilst such scenes passed at Ruthven, the capital presented a stirring scene. Lennox, who was at his castle of Dalkeith, in the immediate neighbourhood of the city, when he received the intelligence of the surprise of the king, deeming himself insecure in the open country, took refuge with his household within the town. On his arrival, the magistrates despatched messengers to Ruthven, to ascertain the truth or falsehood of the king's captivity from his own lips; the ministers of the Kirk began to exult, and rouse the people to join with the Ruthven lords; and Mr James Lawson, although earnestly entreated, by the provost of the city, to be temperate in his sermon, replying, in the words of Micah, that what the Lord put in his mouth he would speak,[1] seized the opportunity to deliver from the pulpit a bitter and emphatic attack upon the duke and his profligate associate Arran. It was true, he said, that these two barons had subscribed the Confession of Faith, professed the true religion, and communicated with their brethren at the Lord's table; but their deeds testified that they were utter enemies of the truth. Had they not violated discipline, despised the solemn sentence of excommunication, set up *tulchan* bishops, and traduced the most godly of the nobility and of the ministry? And as for this Duke of Lennox, what had been his practices since the day he came amongst them? With what taxes had he burdened the commonwealth, to sustain his intolerable pride? What vanity in apparel; what looseness in manners; what superfluity in banqueting; what fruits and follies of French growth had he not imported into their simple country? Well might they be thankful; well praise God for their delivery from what was to have been executed the next Tuesday. Well did it become Edinburgh to take up the song of the Psalmist,—"*Laqueus contritus est, et nos liberati sumus.*"[2]

Whilst the ministers of the Kirk thus eulogised the enterprise of the Ruthven lords, Elizabeth, who had speedily received intelligence of their success, despatched Sir George Carey to Scotland, with letters to the young king, and instructions to co-operate with her ambassador Bowes in strengthening the hands of Gowrie and his faction. Randolph, too, wrote in great exultation to Walsingham, rejoicing in the success of the revolution; and, with the avidity and instinct of the bird which comes out in the storm, requesting to be again employed in the troubled atmosphere of Scotland. Unmoved by the violence of the measures which had been adopted, he, in the spirit of the Puritan party to which he belonged, pronounced the king's captivity a reward conferred by God on His sincere followers. "If it be true," said he, "that the king be now in the Protestants' hands, the duke pursued, Arran imprisoned, and his brother slain, we may then see from this what it is to be true followers of Christ, in earnest preaching, and persevering in setting forth His Word without respect or worldly policies."[3] It seems strange it should never have occurred to this zealous diplomatist, that the imprisonment of a king, and the violent invasion and slaughter of his councillors, were not the fruits to be expected from the gospel of peace and love.

Meanwhile the captive monarch considered the late proceedings in a very different light, and meditated many schemes of escape and revenge; but he was alone, and closely watched: he did not even consider his life in

[1] Calderwood, MS. History, fol. 1205, 1206.

[2] Calderwood MS., fol. 1206, Ayscough, 4736, British Museum.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, September 2, 1582, Maidstone.

safety; and although it would be difficult to believe that Gowrie and his associates had any such atrocious designs, yet the history of Scotland afforded him too good a ground for these apprehensions. Lennox, on the other hand, was timid and irresolute, allowed the precious moments for action to pass, and contented himself with despatching Lord Herries, and the Abbot of Newbottle, with some offers of reconciliation, which were instantly rejected.[1]

These envoys, on arriving at Stirling, where Gowrie and his fellow-conspirators now held the king a prisoner, were not permitted to see James in private, but were introduced to him in the council-chamber, where they declared their message. "The Duke of Lennox," they said, "had sent them to inquire into the truth of a rumour, that his sovereign lord was forcibly detained in the hands of his enemies; for if it were so, it was his duty to set him free; and with the assistance of his good subjects, he would instantly make the attempt." The scene which occurred, on the delivery of this message, must have been an extraordinary one. Without giving Gowrie or his friends a moment to reply, James started from his seat, crying out it was all true; he was a captive; he was not at liberty to go where he chose, or to move a step without a guard: and he bade them tell it openly, that all who loved him should assist the duke, and achieve his deliverance. The Ruthven lords were, for a moment, overwhelmed with confusion: but they outbraved the accusation. Their sovereign, they declared, had no more faithful subjects than themselves; nor should he be denied to go where he pleased; only, they would not permit the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Arran to mislead him any longer. If he valued, therefore, the life of that person, he would do well to cause him to retire instantly, and quietly, to France. If this were not done, they must call him to account for his late actions, and enforce against him the most rigorous penalty of the law.[2] Such was the message which they sent back by Lord Herries; and they followed it up by a peremptory command to Lennox to deliver up Dumbarton castle, quit the kingdom within twelve days, and, meanwhile, confine himself with a small train to his houses of Aberdour or Dalkeith; orders which, after a short consideration, he despondingly and pusillanimously prepared to obey.[3]

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office.

[2] Spottiswood, pp. 320, 321.

[3] Copy of the time, endorsed, 14th September from Stirling, 20th September to Windsor; also MS. Letter, Bowes to Walsingham, Stirling, 20th September 1582, Bowes' Letter-book.

CHAPTER III.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1582—1584.

All was now joy and exultation with the Ruthven lords, and the ministers of the Kirk, who cordially embraced their cause. Mr John Durie, who had been banished from his pulpit, in the capital, was brought back in processional triumph. As he entered the town, a crowd of nearly two thousand people walked before him bareheaded, and singing the 124th Psalm; and, amid the shouts of the citizens, conducted him to the High Church.[4] It

[4] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1212. They sang it in four parts.

was observed that Lennox, from a window, looked down on the crowd, and tore his beard for anger; but although still supported by a considerable party amongst the citizens, he shewed no disposition to contest the field with his enemies; and next day, accompanied by Lord Maxwell, Fernyhirst, and others of his friends, he left the city, and took the road to Dalkeith. This, however, was only to blind his opponents; for he soon wheeled off in an opposite direction, and, with eighty horse, galloped to Dumbarton.[1]

Meanwhile Gowrie and his associates carried all with a bold hand. They had already compelled the king to issue a proclamation, in which he declared that he was a free monarch, and preferred to remain for the present at Stirling; both assertions being well known to be false. They now committed Arran to a stricter ward, summoned a convention of the nobility for an early day, required the Kirk to send commissioners to this Assembly, promised to hear and remove its complaints, and gave a cordial welcome to Sir George Carey and Sir Robert Bowes, the English ambassadors, who had now arrived at Stirling.[2]

At this audience Carey delivered a gracious message from his royal mistress; but when he alluded to the dangerous practices of Lennox, and charged him with meditating an alteration in religion, and the overthrow of the king's estate and person, James could not conceal his passion and disgust. He warmly vindicated his favourite: affirmed that nothing had been done by Lennox alone, but with advice of the council; and declared his utter disbelief that any treason could be proved against him.[3] Elizabeth and Walsingham, however, trusted that this would not be so difficult; for they had lately seized and examined two persons, who managed the secret correspondence which the imprisoned Queen of Scots had recently carried on with Lennox, her son, and the court of France. These were George Douglas of Lochleven, the same who had assisted the queen in her escape, and the noted Archibald Douglas, cousin to the late Regent Morton, who had remained in exile in England since the execution of his relative and the triumph of Lennox.

This Archibald, a daring and unprincipled man, had been a principal agent in the murder of Darnley, and had played, since that time, a double game in England. He had become reconciled to Lennox, and was trusted, in their confidential measures, by Mary and the French court; whilst he had ingratiated himself with Elizabeth, Walsingham, and Randolph, to whom he unscrupulously betrayed the intrigues of their opponents. On the late fall of Arran, the mortal enemy of the house of Douglas, he had written an exulting letter to Randolph,[4] and had begun his preparations for his return to his native country, when he was seized, by the orders of the English queen, his house and papers ransacked, and his person committed to the custody of Henry Killigrew, who by no means relished the charge of the "old Fox," as he styled him in his letter to Walsingham.[5]

From the revelations of these two persons much was expected; and George Douglas confessed that he had carried on a correspondence between Mary and her son, in which she had consented to "demit" the crown in his favour, on the condition of being associated with him in the government: he affirmed, too, that her friends in France had consented to

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Randolph, 12th September 1582. Calderwood, MS. Hist., fol. 1213.

[2] Calderwood, MS. Hist., Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1211, 1212. Ibid., fol. 1213. Carey had audience on the 12th September. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 14th September 1582, Carey to Elizabeth. Endorsed by himself, "Copy of my Letter to the Queen's Majesty." Bowes was at Berwick on the 10th, and at Stirling on the 14th September. Bowes' Letter-book.

[3] Calderwood, MS. History, fol. 1213.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Randolph, September 12, 1582. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. X.

[5] Ibid., Henry Killigrew to Walsingham, September 17, 1582.

recognise him as king. It was evident, also, that a constant communication had been kept up between Lennox and the captive queen, in which the Bishop of Glasgow, her ambassador at the French court, had assisted; but it would have required much ingenuity to construe this into treason on the part of Lennox, and the examinations of Archibald Douglas gave no colour to the accusation. Arran indeed, who was still a prisoner at Ruthven, offered to purchase his freedom by discovering enough to cost Lennox his head;[1] but the lords would not trust him, and preferred relying on their own exertions to accepting so dangerous an alliance.

In these efforts they derived the most active assistance from the ministers of the Kirk, who, on first hearing of the enterprise at Ruthven, despatched Mr James Lawson, and Mr John Davison, to have a preliminary conference with Gowrie and his associates at Stirling;[2] and, a few days after, sent a more solemn deputation, including Andrew Melvil and Thomas Smeton, to explain to the privy council the griefs and abuses of which the Kirk demanded redress.[3] At this meeting, the causes which had led to the late revolution were fully debated; and a band or covenant was drawn up, declaring the purposes for which it had been undertaken, and calling upon all who loved their country and the true religion to subscribe it, and unite in their defence. Two days after this, Lennox, from his retreat at Dumbarton, published an indignant denial of the accusations brought against him; in which he demanded a fair trial before the three estates, and declared his readiness to suffer any punishment, if found guilty.[4] He alluded in this to the king's captivity, and retorted against the Ruthven lords the charge of treason; but the associates fulminated a counter-declaration, repelled this as an unfounded calumny, and insisted, that to say the king was detained against his will was a manifest lie, the contrary being known to all men.[5] What shall we say or think of the Kirk, when we find its ministers lending their countenance and assent to an assertion which they must have known to be utterly false?

In the midst of these commotions which followed the raid of Ruthven, occurred the death of Buchanan, a man justly entitled to the epithet great, if the true criteria of such a character are originality of genius, and the impression left by it upon his age. His intellect, naturally fearless and inquisitive, caught an early and eager hold of the principles of the Reformation; and having gone abroad, and fallen into the toils of the inquisition, persecution completed what nature had begun. In politics he was a republican; and his famous treatise, "De Jure Regni apud Scotos," was the first work which boldly and eloquently advocated those principles of popular liberty then almost new, and now so familiar to Europe. In religion he was at first a leveller, and with the keen and vindictive temper which distinguished him, exerted every effort to overthrow the Roman Catholic Church; but in his later years, when the struggle took place between Episcopacy and Presbyterianism, his sentiments became more moderate or indifferent; and latterly he took no part in those busy intrigues of the Kirk and its supporters which terminated in the raid of Ruthven. Of his poetical works, so varied in style and so excellent in execution, it is difficult to speak too highly; for seldom did a finer and more impassioned vein of poetry flow through a Latinity that, without servile imitation, approached so near to the Augustan age. In his history of his native country he is great, but unequal: his was not the age of severe and critical investigation; the school in which he studied was that of Livy and the historians of ancient Rome, in which individuality and truth are often lost in the breadth and generality of its pictures. But

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Randolph, September 12, 1582.
[2] On the 15th September 1582. MS., Calderwood, fol. 1227.
[3] Ibid.
[4] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1225.
[5] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1225.

in their excellences he has equalled and sometimes surpassed them. The calm flow of his narrative, his lucid arrangement, the strong sense, originality, and depth of his reflections, and the ease and vigour of his unshackled style, need not dread a comparison with the best authors of the ancient world. The point where he fails is that in which they, too, are weakest—the cardinal virtue of truth. It is melancholy to find so much fable embalmed and made attractive in his earlier annals; and when he descends later, and writes as a contemporary, it is easy to detect that party spirit and unhappy obliquity of vision, which distorts or will not see the truth. In an interesting letter quoted by the best of his biographers,[1] and written not long before his death, he tells his friend, that having reached his seventy-fifth year, and struck upon that rock beyond which nothing remains for man but labour and sorrow, it was his only care to remove out of the world with as little noise as possible. With this view he abstracted himself from all public business; left the court at Stirling, and retired to Edinburgh, where, on the 28th September 1582, his wishes were almost too literally fulfilled: for amid the tumult and agitation which succeeded the raid of Ruthven, his death took place in his seventy-sixth year, unnoticed, unrecorded, and accompanied by such destitution, that he left not enough to defray his funeral. He was buried at the public expense in the cemetery of the Grayfriars; but his country gave him no monument; and at this day the spot is unknown where rest the ashes of one of the greatest of her sons.[2]

Soon after the death of Buchanan, the General Assembly met at Edinburgh on the 9th of October; and the noblemen who had engaged in the enterprise at Ruthven, having laid before this great ecclesiastical council their "Declaration" of the grounds on which they acted, received, to their satisfaction, the cordial approval of the Kirk. Nor was this all: the Assembly issued their orders, that every minister throughout the kingdom should justify the action, and explain to his congregation the imminent perils from which it had delivered religion, the commonwealth, and the king's person; and not satisfied even with this, it was determined to institute a rigid prosecution of all persons who presumed to express a different opinion.[3] But although thus resolute in the support of the Ruthven confederates, as far as concerned their seizure of the king, the ministers severely rebuked the same noblemen for the profligacy of their lives, and their sacrilgeious appropriation of the ecclesiastical revenues. Davison, the minister of Liberton, in his conference with Gowrie and his friends, called loudly on them to begin their reformation of the commonwealth with a thorough reform of their sinful and abominable conversation, polluted as it was by swearing, lust, and oppression; and to shew the sincerity of their repentance by resigning the "*teinds*" into the hands of their true owners;[4] whilst Craig, in preaching before the court, drew tears from the eyes of the young monarch by the severity of his rebuke.[5]

About this time, Sir Robert Bowes, the English ambassador at Edinburgh, having learnt that the celebrated casket, which contained the disputed letters of Mary to Bothwell, had come, in the late troubles, into the possession of the Earl of Gowrie, communicated the intelligence to Elizabeth. By her anxious and repeated orders he exerted himself to obtain it; but without success. Gowrie at first equivocated, and was unwilling to admit the fact; but when Bowes convinced him that he had certain proof of it, he

[1] Irving's Life of Buchanan, p. 273.

[2] Ibid., p. 309. There appears to have been placed over his grave a common flat stone or headstone, with some inscription; but this, from neglect, was in process of years covered up by weeds and soil, and the spot where it once was is not now known.

[3] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1232-4; also fol. 1236.

[4] Ibid., fol. 1227.

[5] Ibid., fol. 1228.

changed his ground, alleging that such precious papers could not be delivered to Elizabeth without the special directions of the king. This was absurd, for James at this moment was a mere cipher; but the leader in the late revolution did not choose to part with papers which, in his busy and intriguing career, he might one day turn to his advantage.[1] Gowrie's is the last hand into which we can trace these famous letters, which have since totally disappeared.

The situation of James was now pitiable and degrading. He hated the faction who had possession of his person: but terror for his life compelled him to dissemble; and he was convinced, that to gain delay and throw his enemies off their guard by appearing reconciled to the dismissal of Lennox, was the surest step to a recovery of his liberty. The most anxious wish of his heart was to see the duke restored to his former power; but to betray this now would, he thought, be to bring his favourite into more imminent peril; whilst, if he allowed him to retire for a short season to France, he might not only escape ruin, but return with renewed influence and power. There were some friends of Lennox's, on the other hand, who exhorted him strongly to attack his enemies, and assured him that every day spent in inactivity added strength to their position and weakened his own; whereas, if he boldly faced the danger, they were ready to assemble a force sufficient to overwhelm Gowrie, and rescue the king. These so far prevailed that, on one of the dark nights of December,[2] it was resolved to attack the palace of Holyrood, massacre the Ruthven lords, and carry off the king; but the ministers, and Sir George Bowes, the English ambassador, sounded the alarm: a strong watch was kept; and although Fernyhirst, Maxwell, Sir John Seton, and other barons, were known to have joined Lennox, and parties of horsemen were seen hovering all night round the city, the enterprise, from some unknown cause, was abandoned, and the king remained a prisoner.[3]

This failure was a triumph to the opposite faction, who lost no time in following up the advantage. A letter was sent to the duke, to which the king had been compelled to put his name, charging him with disturbing the government, and with recklessly endangering the safety of the royal person; whilst a herald was despatched to command him, in the name of the council, instantly to leave the country upon pain of treason.[4] This order, after many vain pretexts and fruitless delays, he at last obeyed; having first sent a passionate remonstrance to his royal master, against the cruelty and injustice with which he had been treated.[5] On his road to London, (for he had obtained permission to pass through England into France,) he encountered two ambassadors who were posting to the Scottish court: La Motte, who carried a message from the King of France; and Davison, who was commissioned by Elizabeth to examine the state of parties in Scotland, and co-operate with Bowes in strengthening the Ruthven faction. It was the anxious desire of the English queen that no communication should take place between La Motte and the duke, as she had received secret information that this Frenchman came to promote the great scheme of an "association" between Mary and her son, by which the Scottish queen was nominally to be joined with him in the government, whilst he was

[1] The letters of Bowes upon this subject are preserved in his original letter-book, now before me, and kindly communicated by Sir Cuthbert Sharp. Very full extracts from them were printed by Robertson, in his last edition, from copies sent him by Birch.

[2] On the 4th December 1582.

[3] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1244, 1245. Also MS. Letter, Sir George Bowes to Walsingham, December 6, 1582, which gives an interesting account of the intended attempt. It was proposed to slay the Earl of Mar, the Abbot of Dunfermline, the Prior of Blantyre, and Mr John Colvile. Bowes's letter-book.

[4] MS. Letter, Sir George Bowes to Walsingham, December 9, 1582. Bowes's letter-book.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, endorsed by Cecil, "From the Duke of Lennox to the Scottish king: from Dumbarton, December 16," 1582. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XI.

to retain the title of king.[1] It was believed, also, that he was empowered to propose a marriage between the young king and a daughter of France, and to strengthen the Catholic party by promises of speedy support. Walsingham, therefore, threw every delay in the way of the French ambassador; and he acted so successfully, that La Motte found all his purposes counteracted. He was eager to hurry into Scotland before Lennox had left it; but matters were so managed, that they only met on the road; and here, too, Davison, who had received his lesson, took care that their conference should be of the briefest description.[2] Lennox then passed on to London, and the French and English ambassadors held their way for Scotland.

Meanwhile the Ruthven lords, with their allies the ministers of the Kirk, were much elated by the triumph over Lennox; and Bowes, in a letter to Walsingham, assured the secretary that Elizabeth might have them all at her devotion if she would but advance the money necessary for their contentment and the support of the king.[3] They selected Mr John Colvile, who had acted a principal part in the late revolution, to proceed as ambassador to the English queen. He came nominally from the King of Scots, but really from them, and brought letters to Walsingham from Gowrie, Mar, the Prior of Blantyre, and the Abbot of Dunfermline, the great leaders of that party. On his arrival at court, he found there his old antagonist the Duke of Lennox, who had brought a letter and a message to Elizabeth from his royal master. This princess had, at first, refused to see him under any circumstances; but afterwards admitted him to a private interview, in which, to use the homely but expressive phrase of Calderwood, the historian of the Kirk, "she rattled him up,"[4] addressing to him, at first, many cutting speeches on his misgovernment; to which the duke replied with so much gentleness and good sense, that she softened down before they parted, and dismissed him courteously.[5]

During Lennox's brief residence in London, Secretary Walsingham exerted the utmost efforts to discover his real sentiments on religion; as the ministers of the Kirk insisted that, notwithstanding his professed conversion, he continued a Roman Catholic at heart; and that the whole principles of his government had been, and would continue to be, hostile to England. It is curious to observe by what low devices, and with what complete success, the English secretary became possessed of Lennox's most secret feelings and opinions. There was at the English court one Mr William Fowler, a gentleman of Scottish extraction, and apparently connected with the duke, who had admitted him into his secret confidence. Fowler, at the same time, had insinuated himself into the good graces of Mauvissiere, the resident French ambassador at the court of Elizabeth; and by pretending a devoted attachment to French interests and the cause of the captive Queen of Scots, he had become acquainted with much of the intentions and intrigues of Mary and her friends. This man was a spy of Walsingham's; and his letters to this statesman, detailing his secret conversations with Lennox and Mauvissiere, have been preserved. The picture which they present is striking. In their first interview, Lennox shewed much satisfaction. "Your mother's house," said he to Fowler, "was the first I entered, in coming to Scotland, and the last I quitted, in leaving the country." The duke then told him that the French ambassador was not in London, but had been sent for sud-

[1] MS., State-paper Office, January 20, 1582-3, "Article présentée par La Motte."

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Burghley, January 3, 1582. Ibid., Sir W. Mildmay to Walsingham, December 29, 1582. Ibid., Burghley or Walsingham to Mr. Bowes, January 4, 1582-3.

[3] Ibid., Bowes to Walsingham, about the 18th December 1582.

[4] The interview took place on Monday, January 14, 1582-3. MS., Calderwood, fol. 1250.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, —— (Fowler, I think) to Walsingham, January 1582-3.

denly to court. This was a trick, he added, to prevent a meeting between him and Mauvissiere; and he heard, also, that the Queen of England would not see him; but, in truth, he had little to say to her, except to complain of the conduct of her ambassador in Scotland. At this moment their conference was broken off by some of the courtiers, who appeared dissatisfied that they should talk together; and the master of Livingston, who was in the confidence of Lennox and his friends, joined the party. Fowler upon this took Livingston aside, and expressed his astonishment that the duke should have left Scotland, when he could muster so strong a party against his enemies. Livingston replied, that Lennox knew both his own strength and the king's good-will; but that he had been forced to leave Scotland, "because the king mistrusted very much his own life and safety; having been sharply threatened by the lords, that if he did not cause the duke to depart, he should not be the longest liver of them all."[1] Arran, it appeared, had also written to James, assuring him that the only surety for his life was to send Lennox out of Scotland; and Fowler, in his secret meetings with Mauvissiere, the French ambassador, had the address to elicit from him, and communicate to Walsingham, the intended policy of France. La Motte Fenelon had been sent, he said, to renew the old league with Scotland; to offer succour to the young king, if he found him in captivity, and a guard for the security of his person; to promise pensions to the principal noblemen in Scotland, as they had in Cardinal Beaton's time; and, if possible, to advise a marriage with Spain. As to James's religious sentiments, Lennox had assured Mauvissiere that the young king was so constant to the Reformed faith, that he would lose his life rather than forsake it; and when the ambassador asked the duke whether he, too, was a Huguenot, he declared that he professed the same faith as his royal master.[2]

At the same time that he thus fathomed the schemes of Lennox and the French court, Walsingham had secured and corrupted another agent of the captive queen's, who, on the discovery of his practices with Mary and the English Catholics, had, as we have above seen, been thrown into prison by Elizabeth. This was that same Archibald Douglas, above mentioned as a man of considerable ability and restless intrigue. It had been proposed by Lennox to bring Douglas back to Scotland, and employ his power and talents against the English faction and the Kirk; but the young king had shrunk from receiving a man stained with his father's blood: and the prisoner, anxious for his freedom, was ready to purchase it by betraying the secrets of his royal mistress; consenting to plot against her with the same activity which he had exerted in her behalf.[3] We shall soon perceive the success of this base scheme, and its fatal influence upon the fate of Mary.

In the meantime Elizabeth gave an audience to Colvile, the ambassador of Gowrie and the Kirk, and assured him of her entire approval of their spirited proceedings against Lennox. She cautioned him, in strong terms, against French intrigues; observing that, though the king promised fair, yet, as the recent conspiracy for seizing his person plainly shewed, "*Satanas non dormit;*" and she concluded by a general assurance of support, and a promise to restore Archibald Douglas to his native country, as soon as he had cleared himself from the accusations against him in England.[4] Scotland, during these transactions, must have been in a state of extraordinary excite-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, January 5, 1582-3. Fowler used a mark, or cipher, for his name.

[2] Fowler to Walsingham, January 19, 1582-3. Also same (as I think) to Walsingham, January 1582-3.

[3] State-paper Office, ——— to Walsingham, January 1582-3.

[4] State-paper Office, January 18, 1582-3, Her Majesty's answer to Mr Colvile's negotiation.

ment: it was a busy stirring stage, upon which the young king, the ministers of the Kirk, the French ambassador, and Gowrie, with the rest of the Ruthven lords, acted their different parts with the utmost zeal and activity. James, whom necessity had made an adept in political hypocrisy, or, as he sometimes styled it, kingcraft, pretended to be completely reconciled to the departure of Lennox, and said nothing in condemnation of the violent conduct of his opponents; whilst he secretly intrigued for the recall of his favourite, and anticipated the moment when he should resume his liberty, and take an ample revenge upon his enemies. The ministers, on their side, deemed the season too precious to be neglected; they had expelled the man whom they considered the emissary of Antichrist, the young king's person was in the hands of their friends, and they determined that he should remain so.

Such being the state of things, the arrival of Monsieur de Menainville, the French ambassador, and his request to have a speedy audience of the king, aroused them to instant action. From the pulpits resounded the notes of warning and alarm. France was depicted as the stronghold of idolatry; the French king pointed out as the tiger who glutted himself with the blood of God's people; it became amongst them a matter of serious debate whether it were lawful to receive any ambassador from an idolater; and when the more violent could not carry their wishes, and it was decided that, "in matters politick," such a messenger might be permitted to enter the kingdom, a committee was appointed to wait upon the young king, and read him a solemn lesson of admonition.[1] In this interview James behaved with spirit, and proved a match in theological and political controversy for the divines who came to instruct him. These were Pont, Lawson, Lindsay, and Davison; and, on entering the royal cabinet, they found Gowrie, the justice-clerk, and others of the council, with the king, who thanked them for their advice, but observed that he was bound by the law of nations to use courtesy to all ambassadors. Should an envoy come from the Pope, or even from the Turk, still he must receive him. This Lawson stoutly controverted; but the king not only maintained his point, but took occasion to blame the abuse with which this minister had assailed the French monarch. "As for that," said they, "the priests speak worse of your grace in France, than we of the king of France in Scotland."—"And must ye imitate them in evil?" retorted James. "Not in evil," was their answer, "but in liberty. It is as fair for us to speak the truth boldly, as they boldly speak lees;[2] and if we were silent, the chronicles would speak and reprove it."—"Chronicles," said James, "ye write not histories when ye preach;" upon which Davison whispered in Lawson's ear that preachers had more authority to declare the truth in preaching, than any historiographer in the world. Gowrie then observed, that as hasty a riddance as might be should be got of the French ambassadors, and the ministers took their leave; but Davison lingered for a moment behind his brethren, craved a private word in the king's ear, and remonstrated *sotto voce* against his profane custom of swearing in the course of his argument. "Sir," said he, "I thought good to advertise you, but not before the rest, that ye swore and took God's name in vain too often in your speeches." James was nowise displeased with this honest freedom; but, accompanying the reverend monitor to the door of the cabinet, put his hand lovingly upon his shoulder, expressed his thanks for the reproof, and, above all, lauded him for the unusually quiet manner in which it had been administered.[3]

No such reserve or delicacy, however, was shewn by the ministers to the French ambassadors; and Monsieur de Menainville, a man of great spirit, was compelled to vindicate their

[1] MS., Calderwood, pp. 1247-51, inclusive, British Museum.

[2] "Lees," lies.

[3] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1250, 1252.

privileges in his first public audience. It had been debated by the Kirk, with a reference to their arrival, whether private masses should be permitted under any circumstances; and aware of this, he had scarcely risen from kissing the king's hand, when he put on his cap, and boldly claimed the privileges which belonged to his office. "I am come," said he, "from the most Christian king of France, my sovereign, to offer all aid to the establishment of quietness; and being an ambassador, and not a subject, I crave to be treated as such; and as I have food allotted for my body, so do I require to be allowed the food of my soul, I mean the mass; which if it is denied me, I may not stay and suffer a Christian prince's authority and embassy to be violated in my person."[1] This spirited address made much noise at the time, and drew from Mr James Lawson, on the succeeding Sabbath, a "counterblast" of defiance, in which, seizing the opportunity of elucidating the mission of the king of Babylon, he "pointed out the French ambassage," and denounced Monsieur de Menainville as the counterpart of the blasphemous and railing Rabshakeh. Nor was this all: the indignation of the Kirk was roused to a still higher pitch, when the king commanded the magistrates of the capital to give (as had been usual in such cases) a farewell banquet to De la Motte Fenelon. This ambassador now proposed to return to France, leaving his colleague, Monsieur de Menainville, to watch over the interests of that kingdom in Scotland; and nothing could equal the abuse and opprobrious terms which were employed to convince men of the horrors of such a proposal. Even the sacred ornament of the cross, which La Motte, who was a knight of the order of the "Saint Esprit," wore upon his mantle, was described as the badge of Antichrist; and when the influence of the ministers was found insufficient to stay the feast, a solemn fast was proclaimed for the same day, to continue as long as the alleged profane entertainment was enacting. At this moment, the scene presented by the capital was extraordinary. On one side, the king and his courtiers indulging in mirth and festive carousal; whilst, on the other, was heard the thunder of the Kirk, and its ministers "crying out all evil, slanderous, and injurious words that could be spoken against France;" and threatening with anathema and excommunication the citizens who had dared to countenance the unhallowed feast.[2]

Meanwhile the king became every day more weary of his captive condition; and secretly favoured the efforts of De Menainville, who remained in Scotland, and spared neither money nor promises in drawing together a faction against Gowrie and his associates. It was necessary, however, to act slowly and with great caution, for the keen eyes of Bowes and Davison, Elizabeth's agents at the Scottish court, early detected these intrigues. Walsingham, too, was informed of the frequent communications which took place between the captive queen and her son; and his spies and agents on the Continent sent him, almost daily, information of the correspondence of the English refugees and foreign Catholics with their friends in England.[3] Had Elizabeth seconded, as was necessary, the indefatigable efforts of her ministers, it can hardly be doubted that she would have overthrown the efforts of France; but her parsimony was so excessive,[4] that Walsingham found himself compelled to renounce many advantages which the slightest sacrifice of money would have secured. It was in vain that she commanded Bowes and Davison to remonstrate with the young king; to warn him of the confederacies of foreign princes against religion; to point out the great forces lately raised in France; to declare her astonishment at his suffering the insolence of De Menainville, and receiving, as she heard he had

[1] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1253.

[2] Spottiswood, p. 324. Historie of James the Sext, pp. 196, 197. MS., Calderwood, p. 1253.

[3] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1254.

[4] Orig. Minute, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, March 2, 1582-3. Also State-paper Office, same to same, Feb. 27, 1582-3.

done, with complacency, the congratulations of La Motte on his intended "association" with his mother, the Queen of Scots. It was in vain that she expressed her alarm at the report which had reached her, that he meant to recall the Duke of Lennox from France, and restore the Earl of Arran to his liberty; in vain that she begged him to peruse the letter written to him with her own hand, expressing her opinion of that turbulent man whose ambition knew no limits, and would inevitably cast his state into new troubles. These remonstrances James, who was an early adept in diplomatic hypocrisy, received with expressions of gratitude and devotedness; but they did not in the slightest degree alter his efforts to regain his freedom, and strengthen his party; whilst, with a talent and sagacity superior to his years, he controlled the more violent of his friends, forbade all sudden movements, and calmly watched for a favourable moment to put forth his strength, and resume his freedom.

This patience, indeed, was still necessary; for, although gradually losing ground, the strength of Gowrie, and the faction of the Kirk, was yet too powerful for their opponents; and a convention having been held by them in the capital, (April 18, 1583,) it was resolved to assemble parliament. Against this measure James, who dreaded the proscription of his friends, and the total overthrow of his designs, remonstrated in the strongest terms, and even to tears, when his request was denied. He prevailed so far, however, as to have the meeting of the three estates delayed till October; and cheerfully consented that a friendly embassy should be despatched to England. To this service, two persons of very opposite principles were appointed: Colonel Stewart, the brother of the Earl of Arran, who was much in the king's confidence, and had been bribed by De Menainville; and Mr John Colvile, who was attached to Gowrie and the Ruthven lords. Their open instructions were to communicate to Elizabeth, from the king, the measures he had adopted for the security and tranquillity of his realm; to request her approval and assistance; to move her to restore the lands in England which belonged to his grandfather, the Earl of Lennox, and the Countess of Lennox, his grandmother, and to have some consultation on his marriage.[1] They were, lastly, enjoined to make strict inquiry whether any act was contemplated in prejudice of his succession to the English crown, and, if possible, to ascertain the queen's own feelings upon this delicate subject.[2] De Menainville, the French ambassador, still lingered in Scotland, although he had received his answer and applied for his passports;[3] but the king was unwilling that he should leave court before he had completely organised the scheme for his delivery. Of all these intrigues Walsingham was fully aware: for De la Motte Fenelon, in passing through London,[4] had informed Fowler of the great coalition against the Ruthven lords; and Fowler, of whose treacherous practices the ambassador had no suspicion, told all again to Walsingham.[5] It appeared, from these revelations, that La Motte had in his pocket, to be presented to his master the French king, a list of the most powerful noblemen of Scotland who had banded together for the king's delivery. These were the Earls of Huntly, Arran, Athole, Montrose, Rothes, Morton, Eglinton, Bothwell, Glencairn, and Crawford, with the Lords Hume and Seton. The young king himself had secretly assured La Motte Fenelon "that, although he had two eyes, two ears, and two hands, he had but one heart, and that was French;"[6] and so successfully had De Menainville laboured, that he had not only strengthened his own faction, but sown such distrust and jealousy

[1] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1257. State-paper Office, April 1583, Instructions to Colonel Stewart.

[2] Instructions to Colonel Stewart, ut supra.

[3] Calderwood MS., fol. 1265.

[4] La Motte arrived in London about the 20th February 1582-3. State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, February 20, 1582-3.

[5] State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, March 28, 1583.

[6] State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison and Bowes, March 9, 1582-3. Orig. Minute.

amongst its opponents, that Gowrie, their chief leader, began to tremble for his safety, and vacillate in his fidelity to his former associates.[1]

At this moment, Rocio Bandelli, Menainville's confidential servant, who was carrying his letters to Mauvissiere, his brother ambassador at the English court, betrayed his trust, opened the despatches, and gave copies of them to Sir Robert Bowes, who immediately communicated their contents to Walsingham. The young king, it appeared by their contents, had been urged to explode the mine, and at once destroy the lords who held him in durance; but he dreaded to lose Elizabeth's favour, and was convinced that a premature attempt would ruin all. His wish was to dissemble matters till the return of his ambassadors, Colonel Stewart and Colvile, from the mission to England; and they had not yet left Scotland. Mauvissiere, in the meantime, had warned Menainville that Stewart, whose passion was money, was likely to betray him; and his reply is so characteristic that I insert it:—"As to him who comes into England," (he means Stewart,) "all your reasons, as far as my judgment goes, militate against your own opinion. For if it is his trade to be treacherous to all the world, why should he be unfaithful to me more than to any other? He loves money: granted; but to take my gold does not hinder him from receiving another's. May we not hope that such a man will do more for two sums than for one? He is a party man: I admit it; but shew me any man who has his own fortune at heart, and does not trim with the times. His chief interest lies in England, believe me, much less than in another place which you wot of, where he may hope to gain more by a certain way in which I have instructed him, (in which he will shew you,) than by any other service in the world. For the rest, the game is a good game."[2]

[1] State-paper Office, Copie de la Premiere Lettre, endorsed, Menainville to La Motte; but I think the letter is written to Mauvissiere, March 28, 1583.

[2] Copy, State-paper Office, Menainville to Mauvissiere, March 28, 1583. The original is in French. Also State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, March 28, 1583.

It must have been tantalising to Walsingham, whose unceasing exertions had thus detected the plots of the French court in Scotland, to find that all their efforts to defeat them, and keep the English party together, were ruined by Elizabeth's extreme parsimony. In other matters, not involving expense, she was active and vigorous enough. Holt, the Jesuit, who was engaged in secret transactions with the Scottish Catholics, had been seized at Leith; and Elizabeth strongly recommended that he should be, as she expressed it, "substantially examined, and forced, by torture," to discover all he knew.[3] She wrote to Gowrie, and to the young king;[4] she urged her busy agent, Bowes, to press Menainville's departure; but the moment that Burghley, the lord chancellor, and Walsingham, recommended the instant advance of ten thousand pounds to counteract the French influence in Scotland, "she did utterly mislike such a point," (to use Walsingham's words,) "because it cast her into charges."[5] Of this sum one-half was to be given to the young king, and the rest expended upon the nobility, and the entertainment of a resident minister at the Scottish court; but, when moved in the business, the queen would not advance a farthing.

About this same time, and shortly before the Scottish ambassadors set out for England, the captive Queen of Scots, worn out with her long imprisonment, and weary of the perpetual dangers and anxieties to which the efforts of the Catholic party exposed her, renewed her negotiations with Elizabeth. Some months before this she had addressed a pathetic and eloquent appeal to that princess, imploring her to abate the rigour of her confinement, to withdraw support from the rebels who kept her son in durance,

[3] State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, April 15, 1583.

[4] MS., State-paper Office, Gowrie to Elizabeth, April 24, 1583.

[5] Ibid., Walsingham to Bowes, March 2, 1582-3. Also Fowler to Walsingham, State-paper Office, April 1583.

and to listen to the sincere offers she had so repeatedly made for an accommodation. Some of the passages in this letter were so touchingly expressed, that it is difficult to believe even the cold and politic heart of the English queen could have been insensible to them; but there were others so cuttingly ironical, and at the same time so true, that we cannot wonder the epistle remained, for a considerable time, unanswered.[1] At length, however, Elizabeth despatched Mr Beal, one of her confidential servants, a strict Puritan, and a man of severe saturnine temper, to confer with the imprisoned queen. It may be doubted whether she had any serious intentions of listening to Mary; but she was anxious, before she received the ambassadors, Stewart and Colvile, to probe her feelings, and ascertain how far there existed any mutual confidence between her and her son; and Beal's letters to Walsingham present us with an interesting picture of this conference. Lord Shrewsbury had been associated with him in the negotiation, of which he gave this account to the English secretary:—"Since our last despatch," said he, "this earl and I have once repaired unto this lady; and whilst he went out to meet some gentlemen of the country at the cock-fight, it pleased her to spend some part of the afternoon in talk with me, of sundry matters of the estate of Scotland. . . . In conclusion, she solemnly protested, before Nau,[2] that she and her son would do anything they could to deserve her majesty's favour; and said that she was not so irreligious and careless of her honour and the force of an oath, as either before God or man she should be found to break that which she had promised; and she added, that she was now old, and that it was not for her now to seek any ambition or great estate, either in the one realm or the other, as in her youth she might; but only desired to live the rest of the small time of her life in quietness, in some honourable sort: she said she was diseased, and subject to many sicknesses, albeit, these many winters, she never was so well as she was this. She had a great heart which had preserved her, and desired now to be at rest, by the making of some good accord with her majesty, her son, and herself."

Beal then told Mary that, in his opinion, such an agreement or association as had been contemplated was not desired in Scotland, either by the young king or the nobility.

"For the nobility," said she, "all that might hinder it are already gone. I have offended none of them which are now remaining; and therefore I doubt not but they will like thereof. These are principally to be doubted: Lindsay, Gowrie, Lochleven, Mar, and Angus. Lindsay is a hasty man, and was never thought to be of any great conduct or wit; and if he would do anything to the contrary, the way to win him was, to suffer him to have a few glorious words in the beginning, and afterwards he would be wrought well enough. In the association passed between her and her son," she said, "all former offences done to her were pardoned;" adding, "that whatsoever account her majesty now maketh of Gowrie, his letters unto the Duke of Guise, sent by one Paul, which brought certain horses unto her son into Scotland, can declare that he will yield unto anything—she marvelleth how her majesty dared trust him;" and said, "that because the Earl Morton did not, in a particular controversy that was between him and Lord Oliphant, do what he would, he was the cause of his death. . . . Therefore," she said, "there was no stability or trust in him. Lochleven hath" (as she said) "made his peace already. Mar was her godchild, and, in her opinion, like to prove a coward and a naughty-natured boy. . . . Angus had never offended her, and therefore she wished him no evil; but his surname never had been friends to the Stewarts, and she knew the king her son loved him not. . . . Touching her son," she observed, "that he was cunning enough not to

[1] It will be found, with a translation, in Whitaker, vol. iv. p. 401.

[2] Monsieur Nau, Mary's secretary.

declare himself openly, in respect of hissurety and danger of his life, being in his enemies' hands; and what," said she, "will you say if his own letters can be shewed to that effect?" On another occasion, some days later, she confirmed this; observing that, although James might appear to be satisfied with Gowrie and the rest, he only dissembled and waited his time, and must seek some foreign support if he did not embrace England, as he was too poor a king to stand alone against such a nobility; besides, Monsieur la Motte had told her he was well grown, and his marriage could not be delayed more than a year or two. "His father was married when he was but nineteen years old, and the Duke of Lorraine when he was but sixteen. . . . As to herself, she was sure," she said, "of a great party amongst the Scottish nobles, and had a hundred of their bands to maintain her cause, on the occurring of any good opportunity; yet she desired no ambitious estate, either in that country or this, but only her majesty's favour, and liberty."[1]

Elizabeth having thus elicited as much as possible from Mary, and even procured from the captive princess some offers which might open the way to the recovery of her liberty, communicated all that had passed to Bowes, her ambassador at the Scottish court; and commanded him, in a secret interview with the young king, to sound his feelings regarding the restoration of his mother to liberty, and her association with himself in the government.[2] The matter was to be managed with the utmost secrecy; and the English queen was so anxious to receive an instant answer, that Walsingham recommended Bowes to set a gallows upon the packet, as he had done on his own; a significant hint sometimes given in those times to dilatory couriers.[3] In all this, Elizabeth had no serious intention of either delivering her captive, or permitting her to be associated with her son: her wish was to defeat the whole scheme, by making the young prince jealous of his mother; and in this she appears to have succeeded. It is certain, at least, that in his secret interview with the English ambassador, James expressed himself with much suspicion and selfishness; and when Bowes shewed him the paper containing Mary's offers to Elizabeth, he animadverted upon them with so much severity and acuteness, that, had the ambassador himself been the critic, we could scarcely have expected a more determined disapproval. Thus, in pointing to the eighth article, which related to their being jointly associated in the government, he doubted, he said, that some prejudice might come to him, as well at home as otherwise; since it seemed so worded, that she should not only be equal with him in authority and power, but also have the chief place before him: a matter dangerous to his state and title to this crown. Besides, he observed, sundry obstacles might be found in the person of his mother, which might annoy both him and her. She was a Papist; she had a council resident in France, by whom she was directed; she was so entangled with the Pope, and others her confederates, that she could not deliver herself from suspicion. In honour she could not abandon her friends in France; and as, in the person of Queen Mary, (alluding to Elizabeth's predecessor,) he said, it was found, and seen to the world, that her own mild nature could not suppress the great cruelty of her counsellors, but that their desire prevailed to persecute and torment God's people; to overthrow the whole state and government established by King Edward the Sixth; . . . so the Protestants and others in England, desiring a peaceable government and estate, might both doubt to find the like effects in the person of his mother, and be affrayed to come under the rule of a woman thus qualified. These impediments and dangers, he

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Papers of Mary, queen of Scots, April 17, 1583. Lord Shrewsbury and Mr Beal to Walsingham. Also April 22, 1583, same to same.

[2] Minute, State-paper Office, April 25, 1583, Walsingham to Bowes.

[3] Ibid., April 26, 1583.

added complacently, would not be found in his own condition, but rather an expectation of good parts or qualities promising better contentment and satisfaction. He then, at Bowes's request, gave him the whole history of the correspondence between himself and the captive queen; expressed the deepest gratitude to Elizabeth for this confidential communication; and concluded by assuring him that, as he was convinced Mary preferred herself before him in this proposal, till he saw much more clearly than he yet could, the bottom of the business, and her true meaning, he would go no further without communicating with the English queen, and taking the advice of his council; whose opinion he could not now have, on account of the solemn promise of secrecy to Elizabeth.[1]

It is evident, through the whole of this negotiation, that James, if he expressed his real feelings, had a single eye to his own interest; and cared little what became of his unfortunate mother, provided he secured an undivided sceptre in Scotland, and his succession to the English crown on Elizabeth's death. One only thing may be suggested in his defence: it is just possible that, in all this he dissembled, with the object of blinding Elizabeth and Bowes to his purposes for the recovery of his liberty and the overthrow of the English faction. But of this, the result will enable us more truly to judge.

In the beginning of May, Menainville, having fully organised the plot for the overthrow of the Ruthven lords and the return of the Duke of Lennox to power, took shipping from Leith for the court of France; and so confidently did he express himself to his secret friends, that Bowes, who had a spy amongst them, told Walsingham he might look for a new world in August.[2] At the same time, the Scottish ambassadors, Colonel Stewart and Mr John Colvile, accompanied by Mr David Lindsay, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, who went at James's special request, repaired to London, where they were banqueted by Leicester, and soon admitted to an audience by Elizabeth. This princess was, as usual, profuse in her professions and advice to her young cousin the King of Scots, but exceedingly parsimonious of her money.[3] On the subject of his marriage, upon which he had solicited her advice, she promised to write herself; but referred all other points to her council. It was urged by Colvile, in the strongest terms, that the king's person could not be deemed in safety, unless the Scottish guard were increased. By this he meant, in plain language, that James could not be kept in captivity without a larger body of hired soldiers to hold the opposite faction in check. In them, to use the words of the ambassadors, "the life of the cause consisted."[4] And yet Elizabeth could scarcely be prevailed on to advance the paltry sum of three hundred pounds, which she insisted Bowes must pay upon his own credit: and "if," said Walsingham, when he sent him her commands in this matter, "her Majesty should happen to lay the burden upon you, I will not fail to see you myself discharged of the same."[5] It had been one great purpose of Colonel Stewart, in this embassy, to ascertain whether most could be gained by the proffered friendship of England or France. He knew that the first object of his master the young king, was to strike the blow which should restore him to liberty: but this once secured, there remained the ulterior question, whether he should then "run the French or the English course." And if the English queen had been content to relieve James of the load of debt which overpowered

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Edinburgh, May 1, 1583.

[2] MS. State paper Office, April 24, 1583. Bowes to Walsingham. Ibid., May 1, 1583, same to same.

[3] MS., State-paper Office, original minute, Walsingham to Bowes, May 9, 1583. MS., Calderwood, British Museum, fol. 1266. Also MS., State-paper Office, Heads of Advice to be given to the King of Scots.

[4] MS., State-paper Office, Colvile to Walsingham, May 7, 1583.

[5] MS., State-paper Office, minute, Walsingham to Bowes, May 9, 1583. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XII.

him; if she had frankly communicated with him on the succession, and given him her advice upon his marriage; there was every probability that he would have continued at her devotion. Only two days after the Scottish ambassadors had left court on their return, Bowes wrote from Edinburgh to Walsingham, that the Earls of Huntly, Athole, Montrose, and other barons, had met at Falkland; and their "purpose to welter[1] the court and state" was no secret; and that nothing but a satisfactory message from their royal mistress could save the English faction, and prevent a change of government.[2] Yet all this did not alter the resolution of the English queen. It was in vain that the ambassadors remonstrated with Walsingham; that they reminded him of the promises made by the queen to the lords who had seized the king at Ruthven; of the exhortations sent them, at the beginning of the action, to be constant; of the assurances given to them of assistance both in men and money.[3] Gowrie found himself cheated out of the sums he had spent upon the common cause: and perceiving the course which things must take, determined to make his peace with James on the first occasion. Bowes's advances to the English faction were discouraged; and Walsingham bitterly complained that even the wretched three hundred pounds, which he had given from his own pocket, would turn out to be a dead loss to the ambassador, if he looked for payment to her majesty, and not to himself. "Thus, you see," said he, "notwithstanding it importeth us greatly to yield all contentment to that nation, [Scotland,] how we stick at trifles! I pray God we perform the rest of things promised."[4]

At this crisis, intelligence arrived of the death of the Duke of Lennox in France.[5] He had been for some time in delicate health; but the Scottish king had looked forward with confidence to his recovery, and his grief was extreme. His feelings became more poignant when he found the deep affection which his favourite had expressed towards himself on his death-bed: enjoining his eldest son to carry his heart to his royal master in Scotland; and dying, apparently, in the Reformed faith. On the day of his death he addressed a letter to James, informing him that his recovery was hopeless; and advising him to trust no longer to Angus, Mar, Lindsay, or Gowrie, whom he suspected were devoted to the English faction; but to give his confidence to those whom he termed his own party. A blank, however, had been left for their names, and he expired before it was filled up.[6]

This event threw an obstacle in the way of the immediate execution of that plot for his liberty, which the young king had been so long concerting, and from the success of which he had so fondly looked forward to the restoration of his favourite.[7] Elizabeth seized this interval again to sound the king, and some of the leading men in Scotland, regarding those recent negotiations which had been carried on with the captive queen for her restoration to liberty, and her intended "association" with her son. Both prince and council treated the idea with repugnance. James observed to Bowes, that although, as a dutiful son, he was ready to exert himself to procure the comfort and liberty of his mother, he was neither bound to this scheme of an "association," as she had asserted, nor would he ever consent to it in the form which she had proposed. The councillors were still more violently opposed to Mary on both points. "The association," they

[1] To welter; to throw the government into a state of movement and disturbance.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, May 31, 1583.

[3] Ibid., Colvile and Stewart to Walsingham, May 18, 1581.

[4] MS., State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, May 29, 1583.

[5] MS., State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, Tuesday, 1583.

[6] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1268, 1269. Also MS., State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, June 12, 1583.

[7] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, June 5, 1583.

said, "had been proposed in Moray's regency, and absolutely rejected; and they were confident it would meet the same fate now; and for her liberty, if, under restraint, she could keep up so strong a faction, what would she do when free?"[1]

This secret consultation between the English ambassador and the king took place at Falkland on the 24th June; and so completely had James blinded Bowes, that he left court and returned to the capital, unsuspicious of any change. Next day, John Colville, who, with Colonel Stewart, had just returned from England, assured Walsingham "that all things were quiet, and that the last work of God, in the duke's departure, had increased the friendly disposition of the king."[2] But the letters were still on their way to England when all these flattering hopes were overthrown, and the ambassador received the astounding intelligence that the king had thrown himself into the castle of St Andrews; that the gates of the place were kept by Colonel Stewart and his soldiers; that none of the nobility had been suffered to enter, but such as were privy to the plot; and that the Earls of Crawford, Huntly, Argyle, and Marshal, were already with the monarch. On the heels of this news came a horseman in fiery speed from Mar to Angus; and this earl, the moment he heard of the movement, despatched a courier by night with his ring to Bothwell, urging him to gather his Borderers and join him instantly; which he did. But the two barons were met, within six miles of St Andrews, by a herald, who charged them, on pain of treason, to disband their forces, and come forward singly. They obeyed, rode on, saw James, and received his orders to return home and remain at their houses till he called for them.[3]

A few days shewed that this sudden, though bloodless, revolution was complete. The king was his own master, and owed his freedom to the ability with which he had organised the plot and blinded his adversaries.[4] Gowrie, Mar, and Angus, the three lords who had led the faction of England, and kept him in durance, were in despair; but Gowrie, more politic than his associates, had secured a pardon for himself some time before the crisis.[5] His colleagues in the triumvirate fled; and to crown all, Arran, who, there is every reason to believe, had been privy to the whole, after a brief interval returned to court, was embraced by the king, and soon resumed all his pride and ascendency.[6]

It was now nearly ten months since the raid of Ruthven; and as James had dissembled his feelings as long as he remained in the power of the leaders of that bold enterprise, the world looked not for any great severity against them. But the insult had sunk deeper than was believed; and it was soon evident that the king had determined to convince his people that the person of the monarch and the laws of the land should neither be invaded nor broken with impunity. A proclamation was set forth,[7] which characterised the enterprise at Ruthven as treason; and whilst it assured his subjects that all who acknowledged their offence should experience the mercy of their prince, avowed his resolution to proceed vigorously against the impenitent and refractory. At the same time, he published a declaration "of the good and pleasant death in the Lord" of his late dear cousin the Duke of Lennox; informing his subjects that this nobleman had departed in the profession of the true Christian faith established

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Edinburgh, June 29, 1583.

[2] Ibid., Colvile to Walsingham, June 25, 1583.

[3] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1270. Angus's messenger arrived on the Lord's day at night. MS. Letter, Bowes to Walsingham, June 29, 1583, Bowes's Letter-book.

[4] MS. Letter, Bowes's Letter-book, Bowes to Walsingham, July 3, 1583.

[5] MS., State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, July 9, 1583. Calderwood MS., fol. 1273.

[6] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, August 5, 1583.

[7] MS., State-paper Office, copy of the proclamation, July 30, 1583. Also Spottiswood, p. 326. Also Bowes to Walsingham, July 31, 1583.

within his realm in the first year of his reign; and denouncing penalties upon all who pretended ignorance of this fact, or dared to contradict it, in speaking or in writing, in prose or rhyme.[1]

This public vindication of the memory and faith of his favourite, was intended to silence the ministers of the Kirk, who had deemed it their duty to cast out some injurious speeches against the duke; one of them affirming that, as he thirsted for blood in his lifetime, so he died in blood:[2] an allusion to the disease of which he was reported to have fallen the victim. This harsh attack upon his favourite justly and deeply offended the king; and Lawson, the author of the calumny, having been commanded to appear at court, he and a small company of his brother ministers repaired to Dunfermline, and were conducted into the presence-chamber. Here, owing to the recent changes, they found themselves surrounded with the strange faces of a new court. Soon after the king entered, and whilst they rose and made their obeisance, James, to their astonishment, took not the slightest notice, but passing the throne, which all expected he was to occupy, sat down familiarly upon a little coffer, and "eyed them all marvellous gravely, and they him, for the space of a quarter of an hour; none speaking a word; to the admiration of all the beholders."[3] The scene, intended to have been tragic and awful, was singularly comic; and this was increased when the monarch, without uttering a syllable, jumped up from his coffer and, "glooming" upon them, walked out of the room. It was now difficult to say what should be done. The ministers had come with a determination to remonstrate with their sovereign against the recent changes; and he, it was evident, enraged at their late conduct, had resolved to dismiss them unheard; but, whilst they debated in perplexity, he relented in the cabinet, to which he had retired, and called them in. Pont then said they had come to warn him against alterations. "I see none," quickly rejoined the king; "but there were some this time twelvemonth," (alluding to his seizure at Ruthven:) "where were your warnings then?"—"Did we not admonish you at St Johnston?" answered Pont. "And, were it not for our love to your grace," interrupted Mr David Ferguson, "could we not easily have found another place to have spoken our minds than here?" This allusion to their licence in the pulpit made the king bite his lip; and the storm was about to break out, when the same speaker threw oil upon the waters, by casting in some merry speeches. His wit was of a homely and peculiar character. James, he said, ought to hear him, if any; for he had demitted the crown in his favour. Was he not Ferguson, the son of Fergus the first Scottish king? and had he not cheerfully resigned his title to his grace, as he was an honest man and had possession? "Well," said James, "no other king in Europe would have borne at your hands what I have."—"God forbid you should be like other European kings!" was the reply; "what are they but murderers of the saints?—ye have had another sort of upbringing: but beware whom ye choose to be about you; for, helpless as ye were in your cradle, you are in deeper danger now."—"I am a Catholic king," replied the monarch, "and may choose my own advisers." The word Catholic was more than some of the ministers could digest, and would have led to an angry altercation, had not Ferguson again adroitly allayed their excited feelings. "Yes, brethren," said he, turning to them, "he is a catholic—that is, a universal king; and may choose his company as King David did, in the hundred and first Psalm." This was a master stroke; for the king had very recently translated this psalm into English metre, and Ferguson took occasion to commend his verses in the highest terms. They

[1] State-paper Office, copy of the proclamation for Lennox, July 27, 1583. Also MS. Letter, Bowes's Letter-book, July 31, 1583, Bowes to Walsingham.
[2] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1270.
[3] Ibid.

then again warned him against his present councillors; and one of the ministers, stooping down, had the boldness to whisper in his ear that there was no great wisdom in keeping his father's murderers, or their posterity, so near his person. Their last words were stern and solemn. "Think not lightly, sir," said they, "of our commission; and look well that your deeds agree with your promises, for we must damn sin in whoever it be found; nor is that face upon flesh that we may spare, in case we find rebellion to our God, whose ambassadors we are. Disregard not our threatening; for there was never one yet in this realm, in the place where your grace is, who prospered after the ministers began to threaten him." At this the king was observed to smile, probably ironically, but he said nothing; and, as they took their leave, he laid his hand familiarly on each. Colonel Stewart then made them drink, and they left the court.[1] I have given this interview at some length, as it is strikingly characteristic both of the prince and the ministers of the Kirk.

On receiving intelligence of the revolution in Scotland, Elizabeth wrote, in much alarm, to Bowes,[2] and resolved to send an ambassador with her advice and remonstrance to the king. She hesitated, however, between Lord Hunsdon her cousin, and the now aged Walsingham; and two months were suffered to pass before she could be brought to a decision. During this interval all was vigour upon the part of the king and Arran, whilst despondency and suspicion paralysed and divided their opponents. Angus, the head of the house of Douglas, and one of the most powerful noblemen in the country, was banished beyond the Spey;[3] Mar and Glammis were ordered to leave the country;[4] the Laird of Lochleven was imprisoned, and commanded to deliver his houses to Rothes; Lord Boyd and Colvile of Easter Wemyss retired to France; whilst, on the other hand, the friends of the Queen of Scots, and those who had been all along attached to the interests of France, saw themselves daily increasing in favour and promoted to power. Those officers of the king's household who were suspected of being favourable to England were removed, to make way for others of the opposite party. It was observed that James had given a long secret conference to young Graham of Fintry, a devoted Catholic, lately come from France, with letters (as Bowes believed) from the Duke of Guise.[5] It was even noted that a present of apples and almonds had been sent from Menainville to the king; a token concerted to shew that all was ripe for the completion of the plot which he had devised when last in Scotland.[6] In short, although the young king continued to make the fairest professions to Bowes, and addressed a letter to Elizabeth, in which he expressed the greatest devotion to her service, and the most anxious desire to preserve the amity between the two kingdoms, it was evident to this ambassador that all was false and dissembled.

Amid these scenes of daily proscriptions and royal hypocrisy, the veteran statesman, Sir Francis Walsingham, arrived at the Scottish court.[7] His instructions directed him to require satisfaction from the king regarding the late strange actions which had taken place, so inconsistent with his friendly professions to his royal mistress; he was to use every effort to persuade James to reform the accident, which the queen was ready to impute rather to evil counsel than to his own wishes; and to assure him that, if he consented to alter this new course, he should not fail to taste of her good-

[1] MS., Calderwood, fol. 1272.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, July 10, 1583, Walsingham to Bowes.

[3] Spottiswood, p. 326.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, September 19, 1583.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, July 27, 1583.

[6] Ibid. Also MS., State-paper Office, July 29, 1583, Servants of the King's house discharged.

[7] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, September 6, 1583. He came to Edinburgh 1st September. MS., Calderwood, fol. 1278. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XIII.

ness.[1] But it required a very brief observation to convince Walsingham that his mission was too late. He found himself treated with coldness. His audience was unnecessarily delayed; and when at last admitted, the young king was in no compliant mood, although he received him with much apparent courtesy.[2] To his complaints of the late changes, James replied, that he had every wish to maintain friendship with her majesty: but this he would now be better able to accomplish with a united than a divided nobility. Before this, two or three lords had usurped the government; they had engaged in dangerous courses, and had brought their ruin upon themselves. Walsingham then attempted to point out the mischief that must arise from displacing those councillors who were best affected to Elizabeth; but James sharply, and "with a kind of jollity," (so wrote the old statesman to his royal mistress,) reminded him that he was an absolute king; that he would take such order with his subjects as best liked himself;[3] and that he thought his mistress should be no more curious to examine the affections of his council than he was of hers. "And yet," said Walsingham, "you are but a young prince yet, and of no great judgment in matters of government; and many an elder one would think himself fortunate to meet an adviser like my mistress. But be assured, she is quite ready to leave you to your own guidance; I have not come down to seek an alliance for England, which can live well enough without Scotland, but to charge your majesty with unkind dealing to her highness, and to seek redress for past errors."[4] The ambassador then complained of some late outrages which had been committed by the Scots upon the Borders; and the king having promised inquiry, and requested to see him next day in private, he took his leave. This secret conference, however, does not appear to have taken place. The probability is, that Arran, who carried himself towards Walsingham with great pride, had prevented it; and, having bid adieu to the king, the English secretary wrote to Burghley in these ominous terms:—"You will easily find that there is no hope of the recovery of this young prince; who, I doubt, (having many reasons to lead me so to judge,) if his power may agree to his will, will become a dangerous enemy. . . . There is no one thing will serve better to bridle him, than for her majesty to use the Hamiltons in such sort as they may be at her devotion."[5]

This last hint, of the use which might be made of Lord John and Lord Claud Hamilton, the sons of the late Duke of Chastelherault, who had been long in banishment, and now lived in England, was acted upon by Bowes; and brief as had been Walsingham's stay in Scotland, he had found time to sow the seeds of a counter-revolution, by which he trusted to overwhelm Arran, and place the king's person once more in the power of the friends of Elizabeth. By his advice, Bowes bribed some of the leading nobles; and in less than a week after Walsingham's departure, his busy agent wrote to him, that the good course begun by him in that realm was prosperous; that he had met with many of the persons appointed, who promised to do what was committed to them; and that already the well-affected were in comfort, and their adversaries in fear.[6]

This new plot Walsingham communicated to Elizabeth in a letter which has unfortunately disappeared, but to which he thus alluded in writing to Burghley from Durham, on his journey back to the English court:—"There is an offer made to remove

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Instructions for Sir F. Walsingham, August 13, 1583.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, September 6, 1583, Edinburgh.

[3] MS. Letter, original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Elizabeth, September 11, 1583.

[4] Ibid., September 11, 1583, St Johnston.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, September 11, 1583.

[6] Ibid., Bowes to Walsingham, September 17, 1583.

the ill-affected from about the king, which I have sent to her majesty. They require speedy answer: and that the matter may be used with all secrecy, I beseech your lordship, therefore, that when her majesty shall make you privy thereunto, you will hasten the one and advise the other."[1] Arran's quick eye, however, had detected these machinations: orders were given to double the royal guards, the strictest watch was kept at court;[2] and although a body of forty horse were observed one night to hover round Falkland, and all in the palace dreaded an attack, the alarm passed away. The "*Bye-course*" (the name given to the projected conspiracy) was thus abandoned; and Elizabeth, who was dissatisfied with Walsingham's ill success, determined to reserve her judgment on the Scottish affairs, and recalled Bowes from Scotland.[3]

This coldness in the English queen completely discouraged the opponents of the late revolution; and before the end of the year, the king and Arran had triumphed over every difficulty. Angus, Mar, and Glammis, the Lairds of Lochleven and Cleish, the Abbots of Dunfermline and Cambuskenneth, with others who had acted in concert with Gowrie, were compelled to acknowledge their offences and sue for mercy.; whilst a convention was held at Edinburgh, in which the good sense and moderation of the king were conspicuous, in restoring something of confidence and peace even to the troubled elements of the Kirk.[4] Considering the difficulty of this task, it gives us no mean idea of James's powers at this early age, when we find him succeeding in taming the fiery and almost idomitable spirits of one party of the ministers, and reconciling to his present policy the more placable division of the Presbyterians. The great subject of contention between the court and the Scottish clergy was the outrage committed at Ruthven; a transaction which had received the solemn sanction of the Kirk, but which the prince, however compelled to disguise his sentiments at the time, justly considered rebellion. On this point James was firm. He had recently made every effort to bring the offenders to a confession of their crime; and had appointed some commissioners, chosen from the ministers and the elders of the Kirk, to confer with them upon the subject.[5] But this gentle measure not producing all the effects contemplated, a parliament was convened at Edinburgh, and an act unanimously passed, which pronounced "the surprise and restraint of the royal person" in August preceding "a crime of high treason, of pernicious example, and meriting severe punishments." The former act of council, which had approved of it, was abrogated, as having been passed by the rebels themselves during the restraint of their sovereign; and the king now declared his determination to punish, with the severest penalties, all who refused to sue for pardon, whilst he promised mercy to all who acknowledged their offence.[6]

These determined measures were at length successful; and the great leaders of the faction, who had hitherto remained in sullen and obstinate resistance, submitted to the king's mercy. Angus retired beyond the Spey; the Earl of Mar, the Master of Glammis, with the Abbots of Dryburgh and Cambuskenneth, repaired to Ireland; Lord Boyd, with the Lairds of Lochleven and Easter Wemyss, passed into France; and other of their associates were imprisoned, or warded within the strictest bounds. Mr John Colvile alone, though he had been as deeply implicated as them all, refusing

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, September 22, 1583, Durham.
[2] Ibid., Bowes to Walsingham, October 22, 1583.
[3] MS., State-paper Office, Elizabeth to Bowes, September 22, 1583. Also ibid., Bowes to Walsingham, October 15, 1583. Also ibid., Walsingham to Bowes, September 30, 1583, York.
[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, November 1, 1583.
[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, November 28, 1583.
[6] MS. Act, State-paper Office, December 7, 1583.

submission, fled to Berwick;[1] whilst Gowrie, who had already obtained pardon, reiterated his vows of obedience, and remained at court.[2] It was impossible, however, wholly to subdue the Kirk. Mr John Durie, one of the ministers, denounced the recent proceedings in the pulpit at Edinburgh, and was followed in this course by Melvil the Principal of the college of St Andrews. But Durie was compelled, by threats of having his head set upon the West Port, one of the public gates of the city, to make a qualified retraction;[3] and Melvil only saved himself from imprisonment by a precipitate flight to Berwick.[4] This man, whose temper was violent, and who was a strict Puritan in religion and a Republican in politics, when called before the council, resolutely declined their jurisdiction; affirming that he was amenable only to the presbytery for anything delivered in the pulpit; and when the king attempted to convince him of the contrary, he arrogantly told him that "he perverted the laws both of God and man." The removal of so stern an opponent was peculiarly grateful to the court; and as James had assured the commissioners of the Kirk that he was determined to maintain the Reformed religion, and to lay before his council the remedies they recommended for restoring tranquillity to the country, it was anxiously hoped that the distracted and bleeding state might be suffered to enjoy some little interval of repose.[5]

During these transactions, the young Duke of Lennox, having left the French court, arrived in Scotland. He was accompanied by the Master of Gray, a person destined to act a conspicuous part in future years, and whom the king had expressly sent on this mission. On coming ashore, at Leith, they were met by Arran and Huntly, and carried to Kinneil, where the court then lay. James received the son of his old favourite with the utmost joy; restored him to his father's honours and estates; and as he was then only thirteen, committed him to the government of the Earl of Montrose.[6]

It was now expected that a period of order and quiet would succeed the banishment of the disaffected lords; for although the counsels of Arran were violent, there was a wiser and more moderate party in the king's confidence, which checked, for a little while, his rashness and lust of undivided power. To this class belonged the celebrated Sir James Melvil, with his brother Sir Robert, and some of the more temperate spirits in the Kirk. One of these, Mr David Lindsay, accounted among the best of the brethren, addressed a letter at this time to Bowes, the late ambassador, in which he spoke in high terms of the young king. He advised Bowes to write to James; informed him that advice from him was sure to be well received; and added, that his royal master had recently, in private, assured him, that Secretary Walsingham was the wisest man he had ever spoken with; that the more he had pondered on the counsels he had given him, in their late meeting, the better and more profitable they appeared. "I perceive," said he to Bowes, "his majesty begins to take better tent [heed] to his own estate and weal nor [than] he has done heretofore; and espies the nature of such as rather regards their own particular, nor the quietness of this country and his majesty's welfare,

1 MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, December 29, 1583.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
4 Spottiswood, p. 330.
5 MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, November 1, 1583.

6 MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, November 16, 1583. Ibid., same to same, Nov. 20, 1583. Spottiswood, p. 328. The affection of this prince for the family of his old favourite is a pleasing trait in his character. Nothing could make him forget them. Some time after this, two of his daughters were brought over from France, of whom he married one to the Earl of Huntly, the other to the Earl of Mar. A third was destined to an equally honourable match, but she had vowed herself to God, and could not be won from the cloister; and in later years, after his accession to the English crown, James received, with undiminished interest, the youngest son of the house, and advanced him to great honour.

which compels him to see some better order taken, and that by the advice of the most upright and discreet men that he can find in this country; for he shewed me himself, that he got counsellors enough to counsel him to wound and hurt his commonwealth, but finds very few good chirurgeons to help and heal the same, and therefore must play that part himself."[1]

Little did this excellent member of the Kirk dream that, at the moment he was breathing out his own secret wishes, and those of his sovereign, for peace, into the bosoms of Bowes and Walsingham, and entreating their co-operation as peacemakers, these very men were busy getting up a new rebellion in Scotland, to which their royal mistress gave her full approval; but nothing can be more certain. The chief conspirators were the banished noblemen, Angus, Mar, the Master of Glammis, the Earl of Bothwell, Lord Lindsay, and their associates. Of these, Mar and Glammis passed over secretly from their retreat in Ireland; Angus left his refuge in the north; the two sons of the Duke of Chastelherault, Lord Claud and Lord John Hamilton, were sent down by Elizabeth from England to the Borders; whilst Gowrie, who, to cover his purposes of treason, had sought and obtained the king's licence to visit the continent, lingered in Scotland to arrange the plan of the insurrection.[2] In England, the great agent, in communicating with Walsingham and Bowes, was the same Mr John Colvile with whom we are already acquainted; and his letters, as well as those which yet remain of Bowes and Walsingham, admit us into the secrets of the conspiracy, and distinctly shew the approval of the English queen and her ministers. Gowrie, as it appears, had hesitated for some time between submitting to the king and embarking in the plot; but Bowes wrote to Walsingham, on the 4th March 1583-4, that he had abandoned all thoughts of concession, and stood faithful to his friends. He added, that the ground and manner of the purpose was known to very few, as it was thought requisite to keep it secret till the time of the execution approached. Some delay, however, took place regarding the course to be pursued with a certain bishop, who was considered too powerful an antagonist to be continued in power; and Colvile, who managed the plot in London, had a secret meeting with Walsingham on this delicate point; after which, he wrote to him in these words:—"Concerning the bishop, the more I think of the matter, the more necessity I think it, that he, and all other strangers of his opinion, were removed; for it is a common proverb, *Hostes si intus sint, frustra clauduntur fores; neque antequam expellantur tute cubandum est.*"[3] But although Bowes, Walsingham, and Colvile were no mean adepts in planning an insurrection, they had to compete with an antagonist in Arran, who detected and defeated all their machinations. His eyes were in every quarter: not a movement taken by Gowrie, or Mar, or Glammis, escaped him. He was aware that a band had been drawn up, and signed by many of his enemies in Scotland, by which they solemnly engaged to assassinate him, and compelled the king to admit them to his councils.[4] He had received information that, in the end of March,

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr David Lindsay to Mr Bowes, Leith, November 2, 1583. See an account of Mr David Lindsay, in Lord Lindsay's "Lives of the Lindsays," vol. i. pp. 215-217; a most interesting and agreeable work, privately printed by that nobleman.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, January 20, 1583-4. Explained, as to the meaning of the ciphers, by the letter of Bowes to Walsingham, State-paper Office, December 29, 1583. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, January 24, 1583-4. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, February 13, 1583-4. Also State-paper Office, B.C., Forster to Walsingham, March 28, 1584. Also MS., Calderwood, British Museum, 4736, fol. 1315.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Colvile to Bowes, March 23, 1583-4. This must, I think, have been either Bishop Adamson, or Montgomery bishop of Glasgow.

[4] Historie of James the Sext, p. 203. Also MS., Calderwood, British Museum, 4736, Ayscough, fol. 1316.

a general assembly of the nobles, who trusted to overturn the government, would be held at Perth. But he awaited their operations with indifference; for he knew that the Earls of Glencairn and Athole, upon whom Gowrie, Angus, and Mar principally depended, were traitors to their own friends, and had already revealed everything to him. When the meeting accordingly did take place, and the insurgent noblemen called upon all who were solicitous for the advancement of the Word of God, and the setting forth of His glory, to join their banner, their appeal found no response in the hearts of the people, and the assembly fell to pieces without striking a blow.[1]

This premature movement, and its ill success, intimidated the conspirators, and gave new courage to Arran and the king, who sent a secret messenger to Elizabeth, offering the most favourable terms of accommodation, and assuring her that, in supporting Gowrie and his friends, she was the dupe of some dangerous and unquiet spirits, whose purposes varied every month, and who were not even true to each other.[2] The queen hesitated. Colvile had recently received from his brother, the Laird of Cleish, one of the conspirators, certain articles of agreement between them and the English queen, which they expected to be signed. These he was to correct and present to Elizabeth. But this princess was in a dilemma: If she signed the articles, she bound herself to the faction; and should they be discomfited, she furnished evidence of her encouraging rebellion in subjects; an accusation which Arran and his friends would not be slow to use. On the other hand, Colvile maintained that the late failure at Perth was to be ascribed to the folly and impatience of some of their friends; and that now all was ready for the outbreak and success of the great plot. Gowrie was at Dundee, waiting only for the signal from his fellow-conspirators. Angus, Mar, and Glammis were ready to rise and march upon Stirling. If they succeeded, the power, probably the life, of Arran was at an end; a new order of things must be established in Scotland; and the men whom she had just deserted would be in possession once more of the person of the young king, and rule all. At this crisis, this busy partisan, Colvile, exerted himself to the utmost. He found that the English queen, whilst she verbally gave her warm approval to the insurgents, "expressing her gracious and motherly care of the well-doing of the noblemen," steadily refused either to sign their articles, or to receive any messenger from them, till they were openly in arms. He implored them to be contented with these general assurances; and declared that immediate action, without sending any further advertisements to England, could alone secure success. The examples by which he confirmed this argument were the murder of Riccio, the seizure of Queen Mary at Faside, and the recent "raid of Ruthven."

"If," said he, "advertisements had been sent to England before the execution of Davie, the taking of the Queen at Faside, and of Arran at Ruthven, I think none of these good actions had ever been effectuate. But you know, that after all these enterprises were execute, her majesty ever comforted the enterprisers thereof in all lawful manner, albeit she was not made privy to their intentions. Chiefly after the late attempt at Ruthven, it is fresh remembrance how timeously Sir George Carey and Mr Robert Bowes, her majesty's ambassadors, arrived to countenance the said cause. But now, when men does nothing but sit down to advise when it is high time to draw sword and defend, and will lie still in the mire unstirring, and expecting till some friend passing by shall pull them out, it appears well

[1] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 5, Bowes to Walsingham, Berwick, April 10, 1584. Also ibid., same to same, fol. 3, Berwick, April 5, 1584. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Forster to Walsingham, April 2, 1584.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Colvile to his brother, the Laird of Cleish, April 16, 1584. Endorsed by Cecil, "Mr Colvile;" and by Colvile himself, "Copy of my last letter sent to Scotland."

that they either diffide in the equity of their cause, or else are bewitched, and so useless, and that they can feel nothing till they be led to the shambles, as was the poor Earl of Morton.[1] If," he proceeded, "matters were resolutely ordered, what more consultation is needed, (seeing religion, the king's honour, and all good men is in extreme danger,) but first courageously, such as are agreed, to join together in secret manner for the king's deliverance, as was done at Ruthven; or if this cannot be, then to convene at some convenient place openly, publish proclamation to the people for declaration of their lawful and just cause, and so pursue the present adversaries till either they were apprehended or else reduced to some extremity."[2]

When Colvile spoke of the poor Earl of Morton being led to the shambles, he little thought how soon his words were to prove prophetic in the miserable fate of Gowrie: but so it happened. Arran, who was informed of every particular, had quietly suffered the plot to proceed to the very instant of its execution. Having secretly instructed his own friends to be ready with their forces at an instant's warning, he did not move a step till his adversaries were in the field, and, by an overt act, had fixed upon themselves the crime of rebellion. The moment this was ascertained, and when he knew that Gowrie only waited at Dundee for a signal to join his friends, who were advancing upon Stirling, he despatched Colonel Stewart to arrest him; who, with a hundred troopers, coming suddenly to that town before sunrise, surrounded his castle. It was difficult, however, in these times of feudal misrule and hourly danger to find a Scottish baron unprepared; and the earl bravely held his house against all assailants for twelve hours. But he was at last overpowered, seized, and carried a prisoner to Edinburgh.[3] At the same moment that these scenes were acting at Dundee, word had been brought to the court, that the Earls of Mar and Angus, with the Master of Glammis and five hundred horse, had entered Stirling, and possessed themselves of the castle; and when Stewart entered Edinburgh with his captive, he found it bristling with arms and warlike preparations; the drums beating, and the young king, in a high state of excitement, assembling his forces, hurrying forward his levies, and declaring that he would instantly proceed in person against them.[4] So soon were the musters completed, that within two days an army of twelve thousand men were in the field; and James, surrounded by his nobles, led them on to Stirling. These mighty exertions, however, were superfluous. The insurgent lords did not dare to keep together in the face of such a force; and leaving a small garrison in the castle of Stirling, fled precipitately through east Teviotdale into England, and solicited the protection of Elizabeth.[5] As they passed Kelso in the night, Bothwell, their old friend, met them, and held a secret conference; but as such a meeting with traitors might have cost him his head, they agreed that at daybreak he should chase them across the Border; which he did, acting his part in this counterfeit pursuit with much apparent heat and fury.[6] James then took possession of Stirling; the castle surrendered on the first summons; four of the garrison, including the captain, were hanged; Archibald Douglas, called the constable, was also executed; and it was soon seen that the utmost rigour was intended against all connected with the conspiracy.[7]

As its authors were the chief lead-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, April 16, 1584, Mr Colvile to his brother. Colvile's ignorance of the *secret* history of Riccio's murder is striking. See vol. iii. of this History, pp. 215-217.

[2] Ibid., April 16, 1584, Mr Colvile to his brother.

[3] MS. Letter, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 9, Bowes to Walsingham, Berwick, April 19, 1584.

[4] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 13, Bowes to Walsingham, Berwick, April 23, 1584. Ibid., fol. 13*, Bowes to Walsingham, Berwick, April 26, 1584.

[5] MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1321.

[6] Ibid.

[7] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, May 7, 1584.

ers of the Protestant faction, and its objects professed to be the preservation of religion and the maintenance of the true Word of God, it was suspected that the ministers of the Kirk were either directly or indirectly implicated. Of these, three—Mr Andrew Hay, Mr James Lawson, and Mr Walter Balcanquel—were summoned to court; and two in particular—Galloway, minister of Perth, and Carmichael, minister of Haddington—were searched for at their houses by the king's guard, but could not be found. They afterwards, with Polwart, subdean of Glasgow, John Davison, minister of Libberton, and the noted Andrew Melvil, fled to England.[1]

In the meantime, it was determined to bring Gowrie to trial. Of his guilt there was not the slightest doubt. He had been a chief contriver of the plot, and the most active agent in its organisation: but there was some want of direct evidence; and a base device, though common in the criminal proceedings of these times, was adopted to supply it. The Earl of Arran, attended by Sir Robert Melvil, and some others of the privy councillors, whose names do not appear, visited him in prison; and professing great concern for his safety, informed him that the king was deeply incensed against him, believing that he had the chief hand in expelling his favourite, the Duke of Lennox. Gowrie declared, that his part in the disgrace of the duke was not deeper than that of his associates; but anxiously besought them, as old friends, to sue to the king for a favourable sentence. They replied, that to become intercessors for him in the present state of James's feelings, would only ruin themselves, and not serve him. "What, then," said he, "is to be done?"—"Our advice," said they, "is that you write a general letter to the king, confessing your knowledge of a design against his majesty's person, and offering to reveal the particulars, if admitted to an audience. This will procure you an interview, which otherwise you have no chance of obtaining. You may then vindicate your innocence, and explain the whole to the king."—"It is a perilous expedient," answered Gowrie. "I never entertained a thought against the king; but this is to frame my own dittay,[2] and may involve me in utter ruin."—"How so?" said his crafty friends: "your life is safe, if you follow our counsel; your death is determined on, if you make no confession."—"Goes it so hard with me?" was Gowrie's reply. "If there be no remedy, in case I had an assured promise of my life, I would not stick to try the device of the letter."—"I will willingly pledge my honour," said Arran, "that your life shall be in no danger, and that no advantage shall be taken of your pretended confession."[3] Thus entrapped, the unfortunate man wrote the letter as he was instructed; it was sent to the king, but he waited in vain for a reply; and on the trial, when the jury complained of defective evidence, and declared that they could find nothing to justify a capital condemnation, Arran, who, contrary to all justice and decency, was one of their number, drew the fatal letter from his pocket, and appealed to the accused whether he could deny his own handwriting. "It is mine assuredly," said Gowrie; "nor can I deny it; but, my lords, this letter was written, these revelations were made, on a solemn promise of my life. You must remember it all," said he, looking at Arran and turning to the lords who had accompanied him to the prison, "how at first I refused; how earnestly I asserted my innocence; how you sware to me, upon your honour and faith, that the king granted me my life, if I made this confession." The lord-advocate replied, that the lords had no power to make such a promise; and when the prisoner, with the energy of a man struggling between life and death, appealed to their oaths, these

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moyse's Memoirs, p. 50. Historie of James the Sext, p. 103.

[2] Dittay; accusation.

[3] MS., State-paper Office, Form of certain devices used by Arran and Sir R. Melvil against Gowrie, enclosed by Davison in a letter to Walsingham, dated May 27, 1584, Berwick.

pretended friends declared that by them no such promise had been made.[1] The jury then retired to consider their verdict; and as Arran rose to leave the room, Gowrie made a last effort to remind him of old times and early friendship; but his speech fell on a cold ear: and the prisoner, apparently indifferent, calling for a cup of wine, drank, and shook hands with some of his friends around him. He sent also, by one of them, a pathetic message to his wife; begging him to conceal his fate from her, as she was just delivered of her child, and the news, if heard suddenly, might be fatal to her. At this moment the jury returned and declared him guilty, a sentence which he received with much firmness; then instantly rising to speak, the judge interrupted him, telling him that his time was short, as the king had already sent down the warrant for his execution. "Well, my lord," said he, "since it is the king's contentment that I lose my life, I am as willing to part with it as I was before to spend it in his service; and the noblemen who have been upon my jury will know the matter better hereafter. And yet, in condemning me, they have hazarded their own souls, for I had their promise. God grant my blood be not on the king's head! And now, my lords," continued the unfortunate man, "let me say a word for my poor sons. Let not my estates be forfeited. The matters are small for which I suffer. Failing my eldest boy, then, let my second succeed him." It was answered, he was found guilty of treason, and, by law, forfeiture must follow. The last scene of the tragedy was brief. He was allowed to retire for a few moments, with a minister, to his private devotions. He then walked out upon the scaffold; asserted his innocence of all designs against the king's person to the people who were assembled; repeated the account of the base artifice to which he had fallen a victim; and turning to Sir Robert Melvil, who stood beside him, begged him to satisfy the headsman for his clothes, as he had left the dress in which he died to his page. The justice-clerk then assisted him to undo his doublet, and bare his neck; Gowrie himself tied the handkerchief over his eyes, and kneeling down, "smilingly," as it was remarked by an eye-witness, rested his head upon the block. It was severed from the body by a single blow; and his three friends, Sir R. Melvil, the justice-clerk, and Stewart of Traquair, wrapping the remains in the scarlet cloth which he had himself directed to be the covering of the scaffold, had them buried, after the head had been sewed on to the body.[2]

Gowrie died firmly, and it is to be hoped, sincerely penitent; but, even in this dark age of unscrupulous crime and aristocratic ambition, few men had more need of repentance. His early age was stained with the blood of the unfortunate Riccio; he and his father being two of the principal assassins. In his maturer years, he accompanied Lindsay in that harsh and brutal interview with Mary, when they compelled her, in her prison at Lochleven, to sign the abdication of the government. Since that time, his life had been one continued career of public faction; his character was stained by a keen appetite for private revenge;[3] and although all must reprobate the base contrivances resorted to, to procure evidence against him on his trial,

[1] MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 24, Form of examination, and death of William earl of Gowrie, May 3, 1584.

[2] MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 29. Account written by a person present at the trial.—It is difficult to reconcile the conduct of Sir Robert Melvil to Gowrie, as described by Davison, with this sentence in the above account: "He was buried by his three friends, Sir Robert Melvil, the justice-clerk, and Sir Robert Stewart of Traquair;" and we find, from the same source, that, on the scaffold, Gowrie turned to Melvil, with a last request, as if intrusting it to his dearest friend. All this makes me suspect that Melvil only *accompanied* Arran, and did not *assist* him in entrapping Gowrie. Yet, anxious as I was to think the best, the assertion, contained in the original paper sent by Davison to Walsingham, was too clear and direct to permit me to omit it.

[3] "Quant au Compte de Gourie il resemble toujours a luy mesme, collere et vindicatif et sur lequel peult plus la souvenance d'une injure passée, que toute aultre prevoiance de l'avenir."—Menainville to Mauvissiere, March 28, 1583. State-paper Office.

it is certain that, in common with Mar, Angus, and Glammis, he had engaged in a conspiracy to overturn the government.[1] It is singular to find that a man thus marked so deeply with the features of a cruel age, should have combined with these considerable cultivation and refinement. He was a scholar, fond of the fine arts, a patron of music and architecture, and affected magnificence in his personal habits and mode of living. Common report accused him of being addicted to the occult sciences; and, on his trial, one of the articles against him was his having consulted a witch; but this he treated with deep and apparently sincere ridicule.

CHAPTER IV.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1584—1586.

THE death of Gowrie, and the flight of his fellow-conspirators, left Arran[2] in possession of the supreme power in Scotland, and filled Elizabeth and her ministers with extreme alarm. They knew his unbounded ambition; they were aware of the influence which he possessed over the character of the young king: his former career had convinced them that his talents were quite equal to his opportunities. He combined military experience, and the promptitude and decision which a soldier of fortune so often acquires, with a genius for state affairs, and a ready eloquence, in which all could see the traces of a learned education. To this was added a noble presence and figure, with commanding manners, which awed or conciliated as he pleased those whom he employed as the tools of his greatness. Elizabeth suspected also, and on good grounds, that, although he professed a great regard for the Reformed religion,—declaring his fears lest the faction of the queen-mother should regain its influence in Scotland, and seduce the mind of the young monarch from the truth,—still these assérvations were rather politic than sincere. For their truth, she and her councillors had no guarantee; and looking to the profligacy of his private life, his bitter opposition to the Presbyterian clergy, and his constant craving after forfeitures and power, they conjectured that his alleged devotion to England, and desire to continue the amity, was rather a contrivance to gain time till he looked about him, than any more permanent principle of action.

All this was embarrassing to the English queen and her ministers; and there were other difficulties in the way of their recovery of influence in Scotland, to which it was impossible to shut their eyes. They had trusted that the late conspiracy, if successful, would restore Lord Arbroath and Lord Claud Hamilton to their ancient authority and estates; and that their union with the Earl of Angus, who wielded the immense power of the house of Douglas, would enable them to crush Arran, and destroy the French faction in Scotland. But Arran was now triumphant; and his enmity to the houses of Douglas and Hamilton was deep and deadly. Their restoration, he well knew, must have been his utter ruin. He had brought the Regent Morton to the scaffold; he

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Colvile to Walsingham, May 12, 1584.

[2] Captain James Stewart, Earl of Arran.

had possessed himself of the title and estates of the unfortunate Earl of Arran; and as long as he continued in power, Elizabeth foresaw that the exiles would never be permitted to return. She had difficulties, also, with the faction of the Kirk. They had hitherto been encouraged by England; and had been employed, by Burghley and Walsingham, as powerful opponents of the French faction and the intrigues of the queen-mother. But Elizabeth had herself no sympathy for the Presbyterian form of church government: she had often blamed the factious and Republican principles disseminated by its ministers; and now, when the party of the Kirk were no longer dominant, she felt disposed to regard them with coldness and distrust.[1] On the other hand, the young king had avowed his determined enmity to Rome; whilst his opposition was simply to Presbytery as contrasted with Episcopacy. He had formed a resolution to maintain, at all risks, against the attacks of its enemies, the Episcopal form of government which had been established in Scotland. He was assisted in this great design by Arran, a man not easily shaken in his purposes; and by Adamson, archbishop of St Andrews, whose abilities were of a high order, both as a divine and a scholar: and now that Gowrie was gone, and the other great leaders of the Kirk in exile, there was every probability that James would succeed in his object. It became, therefore, a question with Elizabeth, whether she might not gain more by encouraging the advances of Arran, than she would lose by withdrawing her support from the exiled lords.

Such being her feelings, she resolved to be in no hurry to commit herself till she had sent a minister to Scotland, who should carefully examine the exact state of parties in that country. When the conspiracy broke out, Mr Davison had been on his road thither; but he was arrested on his journey, at Berwick, by letters from Walsingham;[2] and when the French ambassador, who was resident at the English court, requested the queen's permission to repair to Scotland and act as a mediator between the factions, Elizabeth readily consented.[3] She was the more inclined to choose this moderate course, as the King of France had recently offered to engage in a strict league with England. He had declared his earnest desire to see the three crowns united in perfect amity, and his wishes that the afflicted state of Scotland should be restored to quiet; whilst he had instructed his ambassador to visit the captive Queen of Scots, to exert himself to the utmost to mitigate the rigour of her confinement, and, if possible, to procure her restoration to liberty.[4]

In the meantime, Arran and the king, although they professed a firm resolution to maintain pacific relations with England, adopted energetic measures to secure their triumph and complete the ruin of their enemies. A parliament was held at Edinburgh,[5] in which Angus, Mar, Glammis, and their numerous adherents, were declared guilty of treason, and their estates forfeited to the crown; whilst some laws were passed, which carried dismay into the hearts of the Presbyterian clergy, and amounted, as Davison declared to Walsingham, to the supplanting and overthrow of the government of the Kirk. The authority of the king was declared supreme in all causes, and over all persons. It was made treason to decline his judgment, and that of his council, in any matter whatsoever; the jurisdiction of any court, spiritual or temporal, which was not sanctioned by his highness and the three estates, was discharged; and no persons, of whatever function or quality, were to presume,

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, June 17, 1584.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, April 29, 1584.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, May 4, 1584. Ibid., same to same, May 10, 1584.

[4] MS., State-paper Office, draft, Points in the French Ambassador's letter, May 13, 1584.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 23, 1584.

under severe penalties, to utter any slanderous speeches against the majesty of the throne, or the wisdom of the council; or to criticise, in sermons, declamations, or private conferences, their conduct and proceedings.[1] All ecclesiastical assemblies, general or provincial, were prohibited from convening; and the whole spiritual jurisdiction was declared to be resident in the bishops: the sentence of excommunication pronounced against Montgomery was abrogated; and a commission granted to the Archbishop of St Andrews, for the reformation of the university of St Andrews, a seminary of education, which was suspected to be in great need of purification from the heterodox and Republican doctrines of its exiled principal, Melvil.[2] To these laws it was added, that all persons who had in their possession the History of Scotland, and the work De Jure Regni, written by Buchanan, should bring them to the Secretary of State, to be revised and reformed by him.[3]

It had been suspected by the Kirk that such measures were in preparation; and Mr David Lindsay, one of the most temperate of the ministers, had been selected to carry to the king a protest against them; but before this took place, he was seized in his own house, and carried out of bed, a prisoner, to the castle of Blackness.[4] It was alleged that he had been engaged in secret practices with England; and this created a presumption that he had been cognisant of the recent conspiracy of Gowrie. Such severity, however, did not intimidate his brethren; and when the recent acts against the Kirk were proclaimed at the Cross, on the Sunday after the rise of the parliament, Robert Pont and Balcanquel, two of the ministers of the capital, openly protested against them. Having satisfied their conscience, and warned their flock against obedience, they deemed it proper to provide for their own safety; and fled in the night, followed hard by some of the king's guard, who had orders to arrest them. They escaped, however, and entered Berwick by daybreak.[5]

Elizabeth now ordered Davison to proceed to Scotland; and the young king despatched the celebrated Sir James Melvil, who was then much in his confidence, to meet him on the Borders. Melvil's commission was to sound the ambassador's mind before he received audience; and after their meeting he despatched a letter to his brother, Sir Robert Melvil, in which he gave a minute and graphic account of their conversation, as they rode together towards the court. Davison he described as all smiles and gentleness, full of thanks for the noble train which had met him on the marches, and earnest in his hopes that he might prove a more happy instrument of amity than his diplomatic predecessors, Randolph and Bowes. Sir James's reply was politely worded, but significant and severe. He had little doubt, he said, that the intentions of the Queen of England were sincere; her offers assuredly were fair, and the rebellion of subjects against their prince could not but be hateful to her; and yet the proceedings of her councillors and ministers appeared far otherwise to clear-sighted men. As for the king his master, he was now a man both in wit and personage, and acute enough to look more to deeds than words. It is the custom (continued Melvil) of some countries to hold their neighbours in civil discord, and send ambassadors to and fro to kindle the fire under colour of concord. No words could more plainly point out the recent proceedings of Elizabeth; but Sir James was too much of a courtier not to avoid the direct application. He utterly disclaimed having that opinion of her majesty, or of the ambassador himself, that many had of *some* counsellors and ambassadors; but he assured him, unless her majesty proceeded otherwise

[1] Spottiswood, fol. 333. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 23, 1584.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 27, 1584.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., May 23, 1584.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 27, 1584.

with the king than she had done yet, matters were able[1] [likely] to fall out to her unmendable miscontentment. I would not speak of auld[2] done deeds, said he, pursuing the attack; but now lately, when Mr Walsingham was sent, his majesty was in good hope of a strait amity to be packed in respect of his own earnest inclination and the quality of him that was sent, and could find nothing but an appearance of changement of mind in him, either upon some new occasion, or by the persuasion of some other party; and, nevertheless, his majesty dealt favourably and familiarly with him, and shewed favour unto sundry that were suspected, at his request, and kept straitly some speeches that were between them; albeit afterwards Mr Bowes alleged the contrary, in such sort that sundry thought it were done to pick a quarrel. And whereas (continued Melvil, alluding to the late conspiracy of Gowrie) his majesty was mercifully inclined to all his subjects, —both they with some of England, and some of England with them had practised, whereof her majesty had some forewarning,—yet they drew to plain rebellion by them that came *het-fut*[3] out of England and Ireland, and were now returned and treated there again; and then you will say, the queen loves his majesty, the queen seeks his majesty's preservation! What is this but mockery?[4] This was a home-thrust, which Davison, who knew its truth, could not easily parry; nor was he more comfortable when Sir James alluded to the conduct of the Kirk, and the state of religion. Lord Burghley himself, said Melvil, when in Scotland at the time of the siege of Leith, had been scandalised at the proceedings of the ministers, and gave plain counsel to put order to them, or else they would subvert the whole estate; and yet now, said he, they are again crying out against the king's highness, whose life and conversation is better reformed and more godly than their own. He then detailed to him more particularly, as they rode along, the "slanderous practices of some of these busy factioners;" and ended with this advice:—"Mr Ambassador,—if the queen require friendship, she must like the king's friends; she must hate his enemies; and either deliver them into his hands, or chase them forth of her country, as she did at his majesty's mother's desire after the slaughter of Davie. Your mistress need not dread the king: he is young, far more bent on honest pastime than on great handling of countries; and, unless compelled by such doings as have been carried on lately, he will keep this mind for many years yet. He is young enough [this was a glance at the succession to Elizabeth] to abide upon anything God has provided for him."[5]

The two friends by this time had reached Melvil's country seat, from which they rode to the court at Falkland, and Davison was admitted to his audience. He found the young Duke of Lennox, and the Earls of Arran, Huntly, Montrose, and other nobles, around the king, who received his letters with courtesy, but expressed himself in passionate terms against the rebellious nobles, whom, he said, he expected Elizabeth to deliver into his hands. To this Davison replied, that no one could be more tender of his estate and preservation than his mistress. As to the noblemen whom he termed rebels, she was as yet utterly ignorant of the true circumstances of the late *alteration*, (by this mild term she alluded to Gowrie's treason;) but she had always regarded these nobles as men who had hazarded their lives in his service; nor could she now deliver them, without blemish to her honour. Did his majesty forget that he had himself blamed Morton for the delivery of Northumberland in his

[1] "Able" is the word in the original. There is some error, however; the sense requires "likely."

[2] Auld; old.

[3] Het-fut; hot-foot.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir James Melvil to my Lord of Pittenweem, or Sir Robert Melvil of Karny.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir James Melvil to my Lord of Pittenweem, or Sir Robert Melvil of Karny.

minority; and had recently refused to give up Holt the Jesuit, who had been concealed in Scotland, and was a notorious intriguer against her majesty's government? Besides, she had good cause of offence from the late conduct of Livingston, his servant, whom he had sent up to require the delivery of Angus and his friends. This man had spread reports injurious to her honour; he had asserted that Gowrie had written a letter in prison, accusing Elizabeth of a plot against the life of Mary and the young king. The whole was a foul and false slander; and she knew well the stratagems which had been used to procure such a letter; but she did, indeed, think it strange that the king himself should credit such stories of one whose life and government had been as innocent and unspotted as hers, and who had shewn such care of himself, and sisterly affection to his mother.[1] For the banished noblemen, she should take good care they should create no trouble to his kingdom.

To all this James answered, with a spirit and readiness for which Davison was not prepared, that for this last assurance there was not much necessity. He could look, he hoped, well enough himself to the defence of his kingdom against such rebels as she now thought good to protect. The case of Holt, he said, was not parallel. He was a mean and single subject; they were noblemen of great houses and alliance. For Gowrie's letter, it was true such a letter had been written; but its terms were so general, as to touch neither her majesty, nor any other persons in particular: nor was the accusation ever substantiated by proof. Her majesty's honour, therefore, was unblemished. James then turned to lighter subjects, talked of his hunting and pastimes, and handed the ambassador over to Montrose, with whom he dined.[2]

A few days' observation convinced Davison that James felt as deeply as he had expressed himself; and that, although Arran's power was great, the king's inclination seconded, if they did not originate, all those severe measures which were now adopted against the banished nobles and the ministers. Nothing was heard of, from day to day, but prosecutions, arrests, forfeitures, and imprisonments; whilst Arran, and the nobles and barons who had joined his party, exultingly divided the spoil. The immense estates of the family of Douglas were eagerly sought after; and Davison, in a letter to Walsingham, conveyed a striking picture of the general scramble, "with the misery and confusion of the country. The proceedings of this court," said he, "are thought so extreme and intolerable, as have not only bred a common hatred and mislike of the instruments, but also a decay of the love and devotion of the subjects to his majesty. . . . The want of their ministers exiled; the imprisonment of Mr David Lindsay in the Blackness; and the warding of Mr Andrew Hay in the north, who refused to subscribe their late acts of parliament, do not a little increase the murmur and grudging of the people; besides the lack of the ordinary ministry here, which is now only supplied by Mr John Craig and Mr John Brand, at such times as they may be spared from their own charges. The king is exceedingly offended with such of them as are fled, blaming them to have withdrawn themselves without cause, notwithstanding some of their friends were already in hands, and warrant given forth for their own charging and apprehending before their departure. Immediately upon their returning," he continued, "the Bishop of Glasgow, and Fintry, another excommunicate, came to this town, and were absolved, *jure politico*, from the sentence of excommunication, and now have liberty and access to the court. . . . The prisoners are all yet unrelieved of their wards, save Lindsay and Mr William Lesly, who, by the great suit of the Laird and Lady Johnston, hath obtained his life. The Bishop of Moray and George

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, June 10, 1584, Davison to Walsingham.
[2] Ibid.

Fleck remain in Montrose. Bothwell hath been an earnest suitor for Coldingknowes; but hath yet obtained no grace: he hath gotten the grant of Cockburnspeth; Sir William Stewart hath Douglas; the Secretary Maitland, Boncle; and the Colonel, Tantallon: all belonging to Angus, whose lady doth yet retain her dowery. The Colonel hath, besides, the tutory of Glammis, with the Master's living. Huntly hath gotten Paisley and Buquhan's lands; Montrose, Balmanno, belonging to George Fleck; Crawford hath gotten the Abbey of Scone; Montrose the office of treasurer and the lordship of Ruthven; Arran, Dirleton, Cowsland, and Newton: all sometime belonging to Gowrie, whose wife and children are very extremely dealt withal. Athole stands on terms of interdicting, for that it is suspected he will relieve and support them. Glencairn hath taken the castle of Erskine; the Laird of Clackmannan hath spoiled Alloa, both belonging to the Earl of Mar, whose living is yet undistributed, save the lordship of Brechin, which is given to Huntly. The Laird of Johnston hath gotten Locharnell, belonging to George Douglas. The living of the rest in exile being like to follow the same course. Arran," he went on to observe, "had been promoted to the high office of chancellor; Sir John Maitland had been made secretary; Sir Robert Melvil, treasurer-depute; and Lord Fleming, lord chamberlain; whilst Adamson, the Archbishop of St Andrews, was in high favour, constantly at court, and busily occupied in his schemes for the total destruction of the Presbyterian form of church government, and in the persecution of its ministers and supporters."[1]

Calm and cold as was the language of this letter, the sum of public misery and individual suffering contained in such a description must have been great and intense; and yet such scenes of proscription and havoc were too common in Scotland to make any deep impression upon Elizabeth, who, when the political tools with which she worked were worn out or useless, was accustomed to cast them aside with the utmost indifference.[2] But her ambassador struck upon a different string, and one which instantly vibrated with alarm and anger, when he assured her that a complete revolution had taken place in the feelings of the young king towards his mother; that they kept up a constant communication; and that all the observations made by him, since his arrival in Scotland, convinced him that French politics, and the influence of the captive queen, regulated every measure at the Scottish court.[3] All pointed to this. The association, concluded already, or on the point of being concluded, between them, by which Mary was to resign the kingdom to her son; the late revolution at St Andrews; the execution, exile, or imprisonment of such as had been constant in religion; the alteration of the Protestant magistracy in the burghs; the reception of English Jesuits into Scotland; the negotiations of the Scottish nobles now in power with the Bishops of Glasgow and Ross, Mary's ambassadors and instruments at the court of France and Spain; the frequent intelligence between the young king and his mother; his speeches in her favour, and his impatience of hearing anything in her dispraise: all were so many facts, to which the most cursory observer could scarcely shut his eyes; and which, to use Davison's words to Walsingham, clearly demonstrated that the Scottish queen, though elsewhere in person, sat at the stern of the government, and guided both king and nobles as she pleased.[4]

This was an alarming state of things to Elizabeth. The king was now grown up: his marriage could not be long delayed. If, by his mother's influence, it took place with a daughter of France; if, to the intrigues of the Spanish faction of the Roman Catho-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, June 10, 1584.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, June 10, 1584.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., May 28, 1584.

lics in her own realm, were to be added the revived influence of the Guises in Scotland, and an increased power of exciting rebellion in Ireland; what security had she for her crown, or even for her life? A conspiracy against her person was at this moment organising in England, for which Francis Throckmorton was afterwards executed.[1] Of its true character it is difficult to form an opinion; but whether a real or a counterfeit plot, it was enough to alarm the country. It seems certain that many Jesuits and seminary priests were busy in both kingdoms, exciting the people to rebellion. Slanderous libels, and treatises on tyrannicide, were printed and scattered about by those who considered the Queen of England a usurper and a heretic: her enemies looked to the Queen of Scots as the bulwark of the true faith in England; and Mary, impatient under her long captivity, naturally and justifiably felt disposed to encourage every scheme which promised her liberty and rest. At this moment, when all was so gloomy, the faction in Scotland by whose assistance Elizabeth had hitherto kept her opponents in check, had been suddenly overwhelmed, its leaders executed, or driven into banishment, and a government set up, the first acts of which had exhibited a complete devotedness to the friends and the interests of Mary.

The English queen was therefore compelled, by the imminency of the danger, to put the question, How was this crisis to be met? Having consulted Davison, she found that any attempt at direct mediation in the favour of the banished lords, would, in the present temper of the young king, be unsuccessful; and to use open force to create a counter-revolution, and restore the Protestant ascendency, was a path full of peril.[2] Setting both these aside, however, there were still three ways which presented themselves to revive her influence, and check the headlong violence by which things were running into confusion and hostility to England. One was to secure the services of Arran, who possessed the greatest influence over James. He had secretly offered himself to Elizabeth, declared his constancy in religion as it was professed in England, and his conviction, that to preserve the amity with that realm was the best policy for his sovereign. He undertook, if the English queen followed his counsel, to keep the young king his master unmarried for three years; and he requested her to send down to the Border some nobleman of rank in whom she placed confidence, whom he would meet there, and to whom, in a private conference, he would propose such measures as should be for the lasting benefit of both countries. A second method, directly contrary to this, was to support the banished lords, Angus, Mar, and Glammis, with money and troops; to employ them to overwhelm Arran, and to compel the king to restore the reformed faction, and the exiled ministers of the Kirk. A third scheme presented itself, in the offers which the captive queen herself had made at this moment to Elizabeth. She was now old, she said; ambition had no charms for her; she was too much broken in health and spirits, by her long imprisonment, to meddle with affairs of state. All that she now wished, was to be restored to liberty, and permitted to live in retirement, either in England or in her own country. She could not prevent her friends, and the great body of the Roman Catholics in Europe, from connecting her name with their efforts for the restoration of the true faith; from soliciting her approval, and organising plans for her deliverance. All this resulted from her having been so long detained a captive against the most common principles of law and justice; but if the queen would adopt a more generous system, and restore her to liberty, she was ready, she said, to make Elizabeth a party to the association, which was now nearly completed, with her son; to resign the government into the hands of the young king; to use her whole in-

[1] Carte, vol. iii. p. 586.
[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Burghley, June 23, 1584.

fluence in reconciling him to the exiled lords; to promote, by every method in her power, the amity with England; and not only to discourage the intrigues of the Roman Catholics against the government of her good sister, but to put her in possession of many secret particulars, known only to herself, by which she should be enabled to traverse the schemes of her enemies, and restore security to her person and government.

All these three methods presented themselves to Elizabeth, and all had their difficulties. If she accepted Arran's offer, it could hardly be done, except after the old fashion, which she so much disliked, of pensioning himself and his friends, outbidding France, and setting her face against his mortal enemies, the Douglases and the Hamiltons, whose return must be his ruin. If she sent back the exiled lords, it equally involved her in expense, and pledged her to the support of the Kirk; to whose Presbyterian form of government, and high claims of infallibility and independence, she bore no favour. If she embraced Mary's proposals,—her safest, because her justest and most generous course,—she acted in hostility to the advice of Burghley and Walsingham, who were deemed her wisest councillors; and who had declared, in the strongest possible terms, that the freedom of the Scottish queen was inconsistent with the life of their royal mistress, or the continuance of the Protestant opinions in England. Having weighed these difficulties, Elizabeth held a conference with her confidential ministers, Lord Burghley and Walsingham. Although of one mind as to the rejection of the offers of Mary, they, contrary to what had hitherto taken place, differed in opinion on the two alternatives which remained. Burghley advised her to gain Arran, to send a minister to hold a secret conference with him on the Borders,[1] and, through his influence, to manage the young king. Walsingham, on the other hand, warmly pleaded for the banished lords. No trust, he affirmed, could be put in Arran; and as long as he ruled all, there would be no peace for England: but at this instant, so great was the unpopularity of the young king and this proud minister, that if her majesty sent home the banished lords, with some support in money and soldiers, they would soon expel him from his high ground, and restore English ascendency at the Scottish court.

Having considered these opinions, Elizabeth decided that she would exclusively follow neither, but adopt a plan of her own. It was marked by that craft and dissimulation which, in those days of crooked and narrow policy, were mistaken for wisdom. To all the three parties who had offered themselves, hopes were held out, Arran was flattered, his proposals accepted; and Lord Hunsdon, the cousin of the English queen, directed to meet him in a conference on the Borders.[2] At the same moment, a negotiation, which had been opened a short while before with the Queen of Scots, was renewed: she was once more deluded with the dream of liberty, and encouraged to use her influence with her son, and persuade him to more charitable feelings towards England and the exiled lords;[3] and, lastly, these noblemen, and the banished ministers of the Kirk, were fed with hopes that the queen would restore them to their country; strengthen them with money and arms, and gratefully accept their service to overwhelm both Arran and the Scottish queen.[4] In this way Elizabeth persuaded herself that she could hold in her hand, and ingeniously play against each other, the main strings which moved the principal

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Instructions to Lord Hunsdon, June 30, 1584.

[2] MS., State-paper Office, Instructions to Lord Hunsdon, June 30, 1584.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, May 10, 1584, Walsingham to Davison. Ibid., Randolph to Davison, May 13, 1584. Ibid., Walsingham to Davison, May 20, 1584. Ibid., Papers of Mary Queen of Scots, Lord Shrewsbury and Mr Beal to Walsingham, May 16, 1584; and ibid., Walsingham to Lord Shrewsbury, June 16, 1584; and ibid., Mary Queen of Scots to the French ambassador, July 7, 1584.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Colyile to Walsingham, May 25, 1584.

puppets of the drama. If Arran proved true to his promises, as Burghley anticipated, she could easily cast off the banished lords: if false, as Walsingham judged likely, they were ready at her beck, to rise and overwhelm him; whilst, from the captive queen, whose restoration to liberty was never seriously contemplated, she expected to gain such disclosures as should enable her to traverse the constant intrigues of her enemies. It is to be remembered that all these three modes of policy were carried on at one and the same time; and it is consequently difficult to bring the picture clearly, or without confusion, before the eye; but it must be attempted.

Elizabeth, in the beginning of July, informed James that she had accepted his offers, and had appointed Lord Hunsdon to hold a conference with Arran on the Borders.[1] The arrangements for this meeting, however, which was to be conducted with considerable pomp and solemnity, could not be completed till August; and Davison, the English ambassador in Scotland, employed this interval in getting up a faction in favour of the banished lords, in undermining the influence of Arran, and in tampering with the governor of the castle of Edinburgh, for its delivery into the hands of the queen. For all this Walsingham sent special instructions: and whilst his secret agents were busy in Scotland, Colvile had private meetings with Elizabeth, and laboured to gain the Hamiltons to join the exiled noblemen. It was hoped, in this way, that the foundation of a movement would be laid, by which, if Arran played false, a result which both Elizabeth and Walsingham expected, the banished nobles should break into Scotland, seize or assassinate the Scottish earl, get possession of the person of the king, and put an end to the French faction in that country. This, as will be seen in the sequel, actually took place, though the course of events interrupted and delayed the outbreak.[2]

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, July 2, 1584.

[2] Ibid., Colvile to Walsingham, May 25, 1584.

It was now time for the appointed conference; and on the 14th of August the Earl of Arran and Lord Hunsdon met at Foulden Kirk; a place on the Borders, not far from Berwick. It was one object of the Scottish lord to impress the English with a high idea of his power; and the state with which he came was that of a sovereign rather than a subject. His retinue amounted to five thousand horse, and he was attended by five members of the privy-council, who, whilst Hunsdon and he alone entered the church, waited obsequiously without in the churchyard. All, even the highest noblemen, appeared to treat him with such humility and deference, that Lord Hunsdon, writing to Burghley, observed, they seemed rather servants than fellow-councillors; and Sir Edward Hoby, who was also on the spot, declared he not only comported himself with a noble dignity and grace, but was, in truth, a king, binding and loosing at his pleasure.[3] In opening the conference, Arran professed the utmost devotion to the service of the English queen; and with such eloquence and earnestness, that Hunsdon declared he could not question his sincerity. There was a frankness about his communications which impressed the English lord with a conviction of their truth; and Hoby, who knew Elizabeth's love of handsome men, sent a minute portrait of him to Burghley, recommending him to the favour of his royal mistress. "For the man," said he, "surely he carrieth a princely presence and gait, goodly of personage, representing a brave countenance of a captain of middle age, very resolute, very wise and learned, and one of the best spoken men that ever I heard: a man worthy the queen's favour, if it please her."[4]

But to return to the conference. Hunsdon, on his side, following the instructions of Elizabeth, complained

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Burghley, August 14, 1584. Ibid., Sir Edward Hoby to Lord Burghley, August 15, 1584.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir Edward Hoby to Lord Burghley, August 15, 1584.

of the recent unkind conduct of James in seeking an alliance with France, and encouraging the enemies of England. It was well known, he said, to his royal mistress, that this young prince, instead of fulfilling his promises to her to whom he owed so much, was practising against her. His harbouring of Jesuits; his banishment of the noblemen best affected to England; his intended "association" with his mother; his intercourse with the Pope; his contemptuous treatment of her ambassadors, all proved this; and would, ere now, have called down a severe retaliation, had he not recently shewn a change of mind, and expressed a desire of reconciliation, which she was willing to believe sincere. She now trusted that Arran would act up to his protestations; and employ his influence with the king his master, for the restoration of amity between the two crowns, and the return of the exiled nobility.

In his reply to this, Arran did not affect to conceal the intrigues of France and Spain to gain the young king; but he assured Hunsdon that all his influence should be exerted to counteract their success and promote the amity with England. As to Elizabeth's complaints, some he admitted to be true, some he denied, others he exculpated. His master, he said, had never dealt with any Jesuits, and knew of none in his dominions: the Scottish king had no intentions of carrying forward "the association" with his mother; nor had he any secret intrigues with the Pope. Arran admitted James's severity to some of the English ambassadors; but had it not been for the reverence borne to their mistress, they would have been used with harder measure: for James had Mr Randolph's own hand to prove him a stirrer up of sedition; and it was Mr Bowes, her majesty's ambassador, who was the principal plotter of the seizure of the king's person at Ruthven, and the recent rebellious enterprise at Stirling. As for the banished lords, it was strange, indeed, to find her majesty an intercessor for men who had cast off their allegiance, and taken arms against their natural prince; and whose proceedings had been so outrageous, that neither the king nor he himself could entertain the idea of their return for a moment. Angus, Mar, and their companions, had never ceased to plot against the government. Let Hunsdon look back to the course of the last two years. With what shameful ingratitude had Angus treated the king his master, in the business of the Earl of Morton, in the affair of the raid of Ruthven, when they seized and imprisoned him, (Arran,) and threatened the king they would send him his head in a dish, if he did not instantly banish Lennox! Hunsdon pleaded against this the king's own letter to Elizabeth, which shewed that he was pleased with the change. Arran smiled and said it was easy to extort such a letter from a prince they had in their hands. Hunsdon replied that James ought to have secretly sought advice from Bowes, the English ambassador. Bowes! retorted Arran: Bowes, as the king well knew, was at the bottom of the whole conspiracy for his apprehension. And, then, look to the dealings of the same lords in the last affair, which cost Gowrie his head. With what craft did they seduce the ministers; plotting my death, and the king's second apprehension, had it not been happily detected and defeated. Nay, said he, getting warmer as he proceeded, what will your lordship think, if I tell you, that at this moment the men you are pleading for as penitent exiles, are as active and cruel-minded in their captivity as ever; and that at this instant I have in my hands the certain proofs of a plot now going forward to seize the king, to assassinate myself, to procure by treachery the castle of Edinburgh, and to overturn the government?[1] 'Tis but a few days since all this has been discovered; and can your lordship advise your mistress to intercede for such traitors?

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Walsingham, August 14, 1574; and MS. notes of the same interview, endorsed by Burghley, August 13, 1584. Also ibid., Hunsdon to Burghley, August 14, 1584.

This was too powerful an appeal to be resisted; and Hunsdon, changing the subject, spoke of the conspiracies against Elizabeth. Adverting to Throckmorton's recent treason, he declared that his mistress the queen well knew that, at this moment, there were practices carrying on in the heart of her kingdom for the disturbance of her government. She knew, also, that the King of Scots and his mother were privy to these; nay, she knew that it was intended he should be a principal actor therein. Let him disclose them all fully and frankly, and he should find that the English queen knew how to be grateful. To this, Arran promptly answered, that nothing should be hid from Elizabeth, and no effort omitted by the king or himself to satisfy her majesty on this point. He then shewed Hunsdon his commission under the great seal, giving him the broadest and most unlimited powers; and the conference, which had lasted for five hours, was brought to an end.[1] On coming out of the church, both Hunsdon and he appeared in the highest spirits and good humour. It was evident to the lords, who had waited without, that their solitary communications had been of an agreeable nature; and the Scottish earl seemed resolved that his own people should remark it; for, turning to the lords about him, he said aloud, "Is it not strange to see two men, accounted so violent and furious as we two are, agree so well together,—I hope, to the contentment of both crowns and their peace?"[2] At this moment Hunsdon and Arran were reckoned the proudest and most passionate noblemen in their two countries; but for this excessive cordiality there were secret reasons, if we may believe an insinuation of Walsingham's to Davison. Hunsdon and Lord Burghley had a little plot of their own to secure the favour of the young King of Scots, by gaining Arran, and bringing about a marriage between James and a niece of the English earl; who, as cousin to Elizabeth, considered his kin as of royal blood.[3] On this point Walsingham felt so bitterly that he accused his old friends of worshipping the rising sun; and observed that her majesty had need now to make much of faithful servants.[4]

On coming out of the church, Arran called for the Master of Gray, a young nobleman of his suite, and introduced him to Hunsdon. It was impossible not to be struck with the handsome countenance and graceful manners of this youth. He had spent some time at the court of France; and, having been bred up in the Roman Catholic faith, had been courted by the house of Guise, and employed by them as a confidential envoy in their negotiations with the captive Queen of Scots. He had always professed the deepest attachment to this unhappy princess; and the young king had, within the last year, become so captivated with his society, that Mary, who had too rapidly trusted him with much of her secret correspondence, sanguinely hoped that his influence would be of the highest service to her, in regaining a hold over the affections of her son. But Gray, under an exterior which was pre-eminently beautiful, though too feminine to please some tastes, carried a heart as black and treacherous as any in this profligate age; and, instead of advocating, was prepared to betray the cause of the imprisoned queen. To her son the young king, and the Earl of Arran, he had already revealed all he knew, and he now presented a letter from James his master to Hunsdon. Its contents were of a secret and confidential kind, and related to the conspiracies against Elizabeth, which gave this princess such perpetual disquiet. After enjoining on Hunsdon the strictest concealment of all he was about to communicate from every living being,

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Walsingham, August 14, 1584; ibid., same date, Hunsdon to Burghley.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir Edward Hoby to Dr Parry. August 15, 1584.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Burghley, October 1, 1584. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Burghley, July 27, 1584.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, July 12, 1584.

except his royal mistress, Gray informed him that the King of Scots meant to send him speedily as ambassador to England, with some public and open message to Elizabeth; under colour of which, he was to be intrusted with the commission of disclosing all the secret practices of Mary. Had Hunsdon kept his promise, we should have known nothing of all this; but next morning he communicated it to Burghley, in a letter meant only for his private eye. It is to the preservation of this letter that we owe our knowledge of a transaction which brings the young king, and his favourite the Master of Gray, before us in the degrading light of informers: the one betraying his mother; the other selling, for his own gain, the secrets with which he had been intrusted by his sovereign. This is so dark an accusation that I must substantiate it by an extract from the letter in question. "Now, my lord," said Hunsdon, addressing Burghley, "for the principal point of such conspiracies as are in hand against her majesty, I am only to make her majesty acquainted withal by what means she shall know it—yet will I acquaint your lordship with all. The king did send the Master of Gray, at this meeting, to me, with a letter of commendation, under the king's own hand, whom he means presently to send to her majesty, as though it were for some other matters: but it is he that must discover all these practices, as one better acquainted with them than either the king or the earl, (but by him.[1]) He is very young, but wise and secret, as Arran doth assure me. He is, no doubt, very inward with the Scottish queen, and all her affairs, both in England and France; yea, and with the Pope, for he is accounted a Papist; but for his religion, your lordship will judge when you see him; but her majesty must use him as Arran will prescribe unto her; and so shall she reap profit by him. . . . I have written to Mr Secretary [Walsingham] for a safe-conduct to him; but nothing of the cause of his coming, but only to her majesty and to your lordship. If Mr Secretary be slow for this safe-conduct, I pray your lordship further it, for the matter requires no delay."[2]

The conference was now concluded, and Arran had succeeded in persuading Lord Hunsdon, not only of his sincerity and devotion to the service of Elizabeth, but of his entire hold over the mind of his royal master. If Lord Burghley, to whom he professed the utmost attachment, would co-operate firmly with himself and Hunsdon, and the Master of Gray, he was able, he affirmed, to hold the young king entirely at the devotion of the Queen of England. He did not despair to unite the two crowns in an indissoluble league; and, by exposing the practices of her enemies, to enable Elizabeth to traverse all the plots of Mary and the Roman Catholics. But there were two parties whom, he declared, they must put down at all risks: the one laboured for the liberty of the captive queen, and her association in the government with her son: the other was, at this moment, intriguing in every way for the return of Angus and the exiled lords; for the triumph of the Kirk over Episcopacy, and the re-establishment of the Republican principles which had led to the raid of Ruthven, and the other conspiracies for seizing the king, and using him as their tool. The first party was supported by France, Spain, and the Spanish faction of the Roman Catholics in England: its agents on the continent were the Bishops of Ross and Glasgow, whose emissaries, the Jesuits and seminary priests, were at that moment plotting in Scotland; it possessed many friends in the privy-council and nobility of Scotland,—such as Maitland the chancellor, Sir James and Sir Robert Melvil,[3] the Earl of Huntly, and it might, indeed, be said, the whole body of the Roman Catholic peers in both countries. It was from

[1] These words seem superfluous, yet they are in the original letter.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Burghley, August 14, 1584.

[3] Ibid., Walsingham to Hunsdon, August 12, 1584.

this party that the late conspiracies against the Queen of England had proceeded, as her majesty would soon discover by the embassy of the Master of Gray; and if she listened to his (Arran's) advice, it would be no difficult matter to detach James for ever from his mother and her friends. But to effect this, she must put down the other faction of the banished lords. The king, he said, hated Angus, their leader; and Angus and the whole house of Douglas were still boiling in their hearts to revenge on their sovereign, and on Arran, the death of the Regent Morton. As to the banished lords of the house of Hamilton, their return must be his (Arran's) destruction; and for the exiled ministers of the Kirk, James was so incensed against them, and so bent upon the establishment of Episcopacy, that he would listen to no measures connected with their restoration. Yet this party for the return of the banished lords was supported by Walsingham in England, and Davison her majesty's ambassador in Scotland; and their busy agent, Colvile, was admitted to secret audiences with Elizabeth, and fed with hopes of their return. If this policy were continued, (so argued Arran,) it would blast all his efforts for the binding his young master to the service of Elizabeth; for rather than one of the banished lords should set his foot in Scotland, James, he was assured, would throw himself into the arms of France and Spain, and carry through the project of an association with his mother the captive queen.

These arguments of Arran explain that jealousy and irritation which appeared in many of Secretary Walsingham's letters regarding the conference between him and Hunsdon. This crafty statesman was well aware that there was a conference within a conference, to which he was kept a stranger; a secret negotiation between Burghley and Hunsdon, the exact object of which he could not fathom; but by which he felt his own policy regarding Scotland shackled and defeated. He looked, therefore, with suspicion upon Burghley's whole conduct in the affairs of Scotland at this time; and these feelings were increased by the court which Arran had paid to Burghley's nephew, Sir Edward Hoby, who formed one of Hunsdon's suite at the conference.

This accomplished person, on the conclusion of the conference, rode from Foulden Kirk, with the Earl of Arran, to ground where he had left his troops; the distance was three miles; they had ample time for secret talk; and Hoby next morning described the conversation, in letters addressed both to his uncle Burghley, and his kinsman Dr Parry.[1] The Scottish earl was particularly flattering and confidential. Bringing Hoby near his troops, which were admirably mounted and accoutred, he pointed to them significantly, and shaking his head, told him, in these ranks there were may principal leaders, who would gladly send him out of the world if they could, so mortally did they hate him; but he feared them not. Nay, such was his power, and his enemies' weakness at this moment, that if Elizabeth would accept his offers, she should have twenty thousand men at her service. To devote himself to her, indeed, would be his highest pride. As for France and Spain he cared little for either: he neither needed their friendship, nor feared their enmity; but with the favour of his royal master, could live in Scotland independent of both; and for these conspiracies against his life, the same God who had defended him in Muscovy, Sweden, and Germany, would cast His shield over him at home. Arran then appears to have changed the subject to James's expectations as Elizabeth's successor, the state of England, the rival interests of the Catholic and Protestant factions in reference to this delicate point, and the probable effects of Mary's intrigues for the recovery of her liberty upon the prospects of her son. So, at least, may be conjectured, from Hoby's description of the great and weighty discourses into which he entered; and

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir Edward Hoby to Dr Parry, August 15, 1584.

he ended by assuring him that the King of Scots desired, of all things in the world, to place himself, and his whole interests, in the hands of Lord Burghley and Lord Hunsdon, the one as the wisest head, and the other the boldest heart, in England.[1] When it is recollected that Arran was no friend of the Queen of Scots, and that Burghley was not only opposed to every scheme for her liberty, but had often repeated his conviction, that her life was inconsistent with Elizabeth's security, we require no more certain evidence of the melancholy fact, that James was ready, at this instant, to desert her cause, and betray her designs to her bitterest enemies.

On his return from this conference to the capital, Arran, presuming on its successful issue, resumed the management of affairs with a high and proud hand. A few days before he met Hunsdon, he had, as we have just seen, discovered a conspiracy against the government. In this plot, the captain of the castle of Edinburgh had been detected tampering with Davison and Walsingham, for the delivery of the fortress into the hands of the English faction; and Arran wisely resolved to defeat all recurrence of such attempts, by taking possession of the place in person.[2] He accordingly removed the governor and officers, substituted his own creatures in their room, demanded the keys of the crown jewels and wardrobe from Sir Robert Melvil, and, with his lady and household, occupied the royal apartments within the castle.[3] He had now four of the strongest fortresses of the country at his devotion—Dumbarton, Stirling, Blackness, and Edinburgh; and his ambition enlarging by what it fed on, he assumed a kingly consequence and state which offended the ancient nobility, and excited their fear and envy. On his return from the conference at Foulden Kirk, he was welcomed with cannon by the castle; a ceremony, as it was remarked, never used but in time of parliament, and to the king or regents; and when, soon after, summonses were issued for the meeting of the three estates, all the country looked forward with alarm to a renewal of the proscriptions and plunder which had already commenced against the exiled lords. But the reality even outran their anticipation. Arran, assisted by his lady, a woman whose pride and insolence exceeded his own, domineered over the deliberations of parliament; and, to the scandal of all, insisted on those acts, which they had previously prepared, being passed at once without reasoning.[4] Sixty persons were forfeited,[5] many were driven to purchase pardons at a high ransom, and the unhappy Countess of Gowrie was treated with a cruelty and brutality which excited the utmost commiseration in all who witnessed it. This lady, a daughter of Henry Stewart, lord Methven, on the last day of the parliament, had obtained admission to an antechamber, where, as the king passed, she hoped to have an opportunity of pleading for herself and her children; but, by Arran's orders, she was driven into the open street. Here she patiently awaited the king's return, and cast herself, in an agony of tears, at his feet, attempting to clasp his knees; but Arran, who walked at James's hand, hastily pulled him past, and pushing the miserable suppliant aside, not only threw her down, but brutally trode upon her as the cavalcade moved forward, leaving her in a faint on the pavement. Can we wonder that the sons of this injured woman, bred up in the recollection of wrongs like these, should, in later years, have cherished in their hearts the deepest appetite for revenge?

Immediately after the parliament, the king repaired to his palace at Falkland; whilst Arran, Montrose, and the other lords of his party, now all-powerful, remained in Edinburgh, engaged

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir Edward Hoby to Lord Burghley, August 15, 1584.

[2] Ibid., Walsingham to Davison, July 12, 1584; and ibid., same to same, August 13, 1584.

[3] MS., State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, August 16, 1584.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, August 24, 1584.

[5] Ibid., August 16, 1584.

in pressing on the execution of the late acts, for the confiscation and ruin of their opponents. Of these, by far the most formidable was the Earl of Angus; who, although banished, and now at Newcastle, retained a great influence in Scotland. He was the head of the Presbyterian faction in that country, the great support of the exiled ministers; and it was his authority with Walsingham that traversed Arran's and James's schemes for a league between England and Scotland, on the broad basis of the establishment of Episcopacy. It was resolved, therefore, to cut off this baron; and Arran, and his colleague Montrose, the head of the powerful house of Graham, made no scruple of looking out for some desperate retainer, or hired villain, to whom they might commit the task. Nor, in these dark times, was such a search likely to prove either long or difficult. They accordingly soon pitched upon Jock, or John Graham of Peartree, whom Montrose knew to have a blood feud with Angus; sent a little page called Mouse to bring the Borderer to Edinburgh; feasted and caressed him during the time of the parliament, and carried him afterwards to Falkland, where the two earls and the king proposed to him not only to assassinate their hated enemy, but to make away with Mar and Cambuskenneth, his brother-exiles, at the same time. Jock at once agreed to murder Angus, and was promised a high reward by the young monarch; but he declined having anything to do with Mar or Cambuskenneth, with whom he had no quarrel; and he left the palace, after receiving from Montrose a short matchlock, or riding-piece, which was deemed serviceable for the purpose in hand. But this atrocious design was not destined to succeed. The villain, who was probably lurking about in the neighbourhood of Newcastle, was detected and seized, carried before Lord Scrope, compelled to confess his intention; and information of the whole plot was immediately transmitted by Scrope to Walsingham.[1] The English secretary recommended that the discovery should be kept a secret from all except Angus and Mar, who were privately warned of the practices against them; and it is from the confession of the Borderer himself, which he made before Scrope, that these particulars are given. The intended assassin thus described his interview with the king:—After stating that he had arrived late at night at the palace, they brought him, he said, into the king's gallery, where he (the king) was alone by himself: and only he, Montrose, and Arran, and this examinant, being together, the king himself did move him, as the other two had done, for the killing of Angus, Mar, and Cambuskenneth: to whom he answered, that, for Mar and Cambuskenneth, he would not meddle with them; but for Angus, he would well be contented to do that, so as the king would well reward him for that. And the king said he would presently give him sixty French crowns, and twenty Scottish pound land to him and his for ever, lying in Strathern, near Montrose.[2]

These facts are so distinctly and minutely recorded in the manuscript history of Calderwood, who has given the whole of Graham's declaration, that it was impossible to omit them; but although there is little doubt of the truth of the intended murder, so far as Arran and Montrose are concerned, it would be, perhaps, unfair to believe in the full implication of the young king, on the single evidence of this Border assassin. To return, however, from this digression, to Arran's headlong career. His hand, which had recently fallen so heavily on the nobility, was now lifted against the Kirk. Proclamation was made that all ministers should give up the rental of

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., December 22, 1584, Scrope to Walsingham. "For the matter of Peartree, I have kept the same secret, saving to the Earls of Angus and Mar, who, I trust, will use it as the same behoveth."

[2] MS., Calderwood, British Museum, 1468, Examination of Jock Graham of Peartree, taken before the Lord Scrope, Warden of the West Marches, at Carlisle, November 25, 1584.

their benefices, and that none should receive stipend but such as had subscribed the new-framed policy, by which Presbytery was abrogated and Episcopacy established. As was to be expected, many of the clergy resisted, and were commanded to quit the country within twenty days; nor were they permitted, as before, to take refuge with their banished brethren in England or Ireland.[1] All this was carried through at the instigation of the primate, Archbishop Adamson, who had recently returned from England, and exerted himself to purify the universities from the leaven of Presbyterian doctrine, and to fill the vacant pulpits with ministers attached to the new form of policy. His efforts, however, met with bitter opposition. At St Andrews, the archiepiscopal palace in which Adamson resided was surrounded by troops of students, who armed themselves with harquebusses, and paraded round the walls, bidding the primate remember how fatal that see had been to his predecessor, and look for no better issue. Montgomery, the Bishop of Glasgow, was attacked in the streets of Ayr by a mob of women and boys, who with difficulty were restrained from stoning him, and kept pouring out the vilest abuse, calling him atheist dog, schismatic excommunicate beast, unworthy to breathe or bear life.[2] Some of the ministers also, refusing to imitate the example of their brethren who had fled from their flocks, remained to brave the resentment of the court; and, taking their lives in their hands, openly preached against the late acts, and declared their resolution not to obey them. The anathema of one of these, named Mr John Hewison, minister of Cambuslang, has been preserved. It is more remarkable, certainly, for its courage than its charity, and may be taken as an example of the tone of the high Puritan faction to which he belonged. Preaching in the Blackfriars at Edinburgh, on the text which declares the resolute answer of St Peter and St Paul to the council of the Pharisees, he passed from the general application to the trials of the Kirk at that moment, and broke out into these words:—"But what shall we say? There is injunction now given by ane[3] wicked and godless council, to stop the mouths of the ministers from teaching of the truth; and sic[4] a godless order made, as the like was never seen before. These is ane heid[5] of the Kirk made; there being nae[6] heid but Jesus Christ, nor cannot be. Stinking and baggage heidis![7] an excommunicated sanger![8] an excommunicate willane,[9] wha sall never be obeyed here! We will acknowledge nae prince, nae magistrate, in teaching of the Word; nor be bounden to nae injunctions, nor obey nae acts of parliament, nor nae other thing that is repugnant to the Word of God: but will do as Peter and John said, Better obey God nor man. But it is not the king that does this. It is the wicked, godless, and villane council he has, and other godless persons, that inform his majesty wrangously,[10] whereof there is aneugh[11] about him. For my own part," he continued, warming in his subject with the thoughts of persecution, "I ken[12] I will be noted. I regard not. What can the king get of me but my head and my blood? I sall never obey their injunctions; like as I request all faithful folk to do the like."[13] The prediction of this bold minister was so far verified, that he was apprehended, and order given to bring him to justice; but, for some reason not easily discovered, the trial did not take place.[14]

It was at this same time that Mr David Lindsay, one of the persecuted ministers, whose mind, in the solitude of his prison at Blackness, had been worked into a state of feverish enthusiasm, was reported to have seen an

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, August 16, 1584.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ane, one. [4] Sic, such. [5] Heid, head.
[6] Nae, no. [7] Heidis, heads.
[8] Sanger, singer. [9] Willane, villain.
[10] Wrangously, wrongfully.
[11] Aneugh, enough. [12] Ken, Know.
[13] MS., State-paper Office, original, Accusation of Mr John Hewison.
[14] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, July 14, 1584.

extraordinary vision. Suddenly, in the firmament, there appeared a figure in the likeness of a man; of glorious shape and surpassing brightness; the sun was above his head, the moon beneath his feet; and he seemed to stand in the midst of the stars. As the captive gazed, an angel alighted at the feet of this transcendent being, bearing in his right hand a red naked sword, and in his left a scroll, to whom the glorious shape seemed to give commandment; upon which the avenging angel, for so he now appeared to be, flew rapidly through the heavens, and lighted on the ramparts of a fortress, which Lindsay recognised as the castle of Edinburgh. Before its gate stood the Earl of Arran and his flagitious consort, the earl gazing in horror on the destroying minister, who waved his sword above his head, his countess smiling in derision, and mocking his fears. The scene then changed: the captive was carried to an eminence, from which he looked down upon the land, with its wide fields, its cities and palaces. Suddenly the same terrible visitant appeared: a cry of lamentation arose from its inhabitants; fire fell from heaven on its devoted towns, the sword did its work, the rivers ran with blood, and the fields were covered with the dead. It was a fearful sight; but, amidst its horrors, a little bell was heard; and within a church which had stood uninjured, even in the flames, a remnant of the faithful assembled, to whom the angel uttered these words of awful admonition:—"Metuant Justi. Iniquitatem fugite. Deligite Justitiam et Judicium; aut cito revertar et posteriora erunt pejora prioribus."[1] Lindsay asserted that it was impossible for him to ascertain whether this scene, which seemed to shadow out the persecutions and prospects of the Kirk, was a dream or a vision; but it brought to his mind, he said, a prophecy of Knox, who, not long before his death, had predicted great peril to the faithful in the eighteenth year of the reign of James.

Elizabeth now recalled Davison from Scotland,[2] and looked anxiously for James's promised ambassador, the Master of Gray, whose mission had, as she thought, been somewhat suspiciously delayed. But this gave her the less anxiety, as she had in the meantime continued her correspondence with the banished lords, whom, at any moment, she was ready to let loose against Arran and the king.[3] She, at the same time, resumed her negotiations with Mary; and this unfortunate princess, who had so often been deluded with hopes, which withered in the expected moment of accomplishment, was, at last, induced to believe that the blessed period of freedom had arrived. Even Walsingham declared himself pleased with her offers, and advised his royal mistress to be satisfied with them.[4] Such was the crisis seized by the accomplished villany of the Master of Gray, to betray his royal mistress, and to enter the service of Elizabeth. Before he threw off the mask, he had the effrontery to write to Mary, affecting the highest indignation at the suspicions she had expressed of his fidelity; and declaring that the best mode to serve her interests was that which he was now following. It was necessary, he said, that the young king, her son, should, in the first instance, treat solely for himself with Elizabeth, and abandon all thoughts of "the association" with his mother. This, he affirmed, would disarm suspicion; and James, having gained the confidence of the English queen, might be able to negotiate for her liberty. But Mary, who was already aware of Gray's treachery, from the representations of Fontenay, the French ambassador, promptly and indignantly answered, that any one who proposed such a separation between her interests and those of her son, or who op-

[1] Sir George Warrender, MS., vol. B. fol. 59. "A vision [which] appeared to Mr David Lindsay, he being in his bed in the house of Blackness, in the month of October 1584."

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, September 17, 1584.

[3] Ibid., Walsingham to Captain Reid, September 23, 1584.

[4] Sadler Papers by Scott, vol. ii.

posed "the association," which was almost concluded, must be her enemy, and in that light she would regard him. To this Gray returned an angry answer, and instantly set off for England.[1]

At Berwick he had a private consultation with Hunsdon, whose heart he gained by his sanctimonious deportment in the English Church, and by the frankness with which he communicated his instructions. His principal object, he declared, was to insist that the banished lords should either be delivered up by Elizabeth, or dismissed from her dominions. If this were done, or if the queen were ready to pledge her word that it should be done, he was prepared, he said, to disclose all he knew of the secret plots against her person and government; and he would pledge himself that no practice had been undertaken, for the last five years, against herself, or her estate, by France, Spain, the Scottish queen, or the Pope, but she should know it, and how to avoid it.[2] Gray had been expressly ordered by James to hold his confidential communications with Burghley alone, and to repose no trust in Walsingham, whom the young king regarded as his enemy. From Arran he had received the same injunctions; and nothing could exceed the confidence which both monarch and minister seemed disposed to place in Cecil. The king paid court to him in a long pedantic letter, written wholly in his own hand; in which he discoursed learnedly upon Alexander the Great and Homer; modestly disclaiming any parallel between himself and the conqueror of Darius, but exalting Cecil far above such "a blind, begging fellow" as the Grecian bard. He addressed him as his friend and cousin, and assured him that he considered himself infinitely fortunate in being permitted to confide his most secret affairs to such a counsellor; to whom, he was convinced, he already owed all the prosperity which hitherto had attended him.[3] Arran, at the same time, wrote in the most flattering and confidential terms to Sir Edward Hoby, Burghley's nephew; and Hunsdon was requested by James to repair from Berwick to the English court, that he might assist in their consultations.[4]

Gray now proceeded to London, and was speedily admitted to an audience of Elizabeth. It may be necessary, for a moment, to attend to the exact attitude and circumstances in which this princess now stood. She had the party of the banished lords, now in England, at her command. Angus, Mar, Lord Arbroath the head of the house of Hamilton, Glammis, and many other powerful barons, were in constant communication with Walsingham; their vassals on the alert; the exiled ministers of the Kirk eager to join and march along with them: they held themselves ready at her beck; and she had only to give the signal for them to cross the Border and attack Arran, to have it instantly obeyed. On the side of Mary, this poor captive had been drawn on, by the prospect of freedom, to offer the sacrifice of everything which belonged to her as an independent princess, and which she could give up with honour. By the long-contemplated "association" with her son, she had agreed to resign the government into his hands, and to renounce for ever all connexion with public affairs, were she only allowed to live in freedom, with the exercise of her religion. Here, then, the Queen of England had only to consent, and in the opinion of even the suspicious Walsingham, she was safe.

Such was the state of things when the Master of Gray made his proposals from a third party,—the young king and Arran. From his intimate knowledge of the most secret transactions of the Scottish queen and the Catholic faction, he was possessed, as he affirmed, of information which vitally touched her majesty's person and estate.[5] This he was ready to reveal,

[1] Papers of Master of Gray, Bannatyne Club, pp. 30-37.

[2] Hundson to Burghley, October 19, 1584, Papers of Master of Gray, p. 13.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, James to Burghley, October 14, 1584.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Papers of the Master of Gray, p. 13, Hunsdon to Burghley, October 19, 1584.

but on condition that she would deliver up the banished lords, or drive them out of her dominions, break off all treaty with Mary on the subject of the association, and advance a large sum of money, in the shape of an annual proof of her affection to the young king. The first was absolutely necessary; for the king his master was animated with the strongest hatred of his rebels. The second was equally so; for Mary's liberty was inconsistent with the security of both the Queen of England and James; her unshaken attachment to the Roman Catholic faith rendering any "association" with her son highly dangerous to Elizabeth; whose efforts ought to be directed to separate their interests, and to secure the establishment of a government in Scotland under a minister opposed to Mary. And here Gray artfully laid the foundation of his own rise with Elizabeth, and of Arran's disgrace. Arran, he insinuated, was not so deeply devoted to her majesty, or so hostile to the Scottish queen, as he pretended. He was proud, capricious, tyrannical, and completely venal. The king, too, was in such need of money, that Elizabeth would do well to remember that his politics, at this time, depended on the supply of his purse. If France bid highest, France would have both the minister and his master. Arran, too, by his pride and extortions, was daily, almost hourly, raising up a formidable party against himself. None, he said, dared to aspire to any interest with the king, whom he did not attack and attempt to ruin. Already he, the Master of Gray, was the object of his jealousy and hatred, for the favour with which the king regarded him. All was yet, indeed, smooth and smiling between them; but he knew well, this very embassy had been given him with the view of separating him from his master. The storm was brewing; but if Arran tried to wreck him, as he had done so many others, he might chance, proud as he was, to have a fall himself. So confident did he feel, he said, in the love of his royal master, that if Elizabeth would grant him her support, he was certain he could supplant this insolent favourite, gain the young king, unite England and Scotland in an indissoluble league, recall the banished lords, overwhelm all the secret plots of the Roman Catholics, and completely separate Mary and her son. To effect all this, however, would require time; for, on two points, the king would be hard to be moved. If the exiles came back, they would bring Andrew Melvil and the banished ministers of the Kirk along with them; and, at this moment, the very mention of such a result would excite James's determined opposition.

Elizabeth was highly pleased with this proposal. She had long distrusted Arran, and felt that her best security lay in the return of the Protestant lords: she was anxious to break off her negotiation with Mary, but did not like the odium of such a course; the blame would be thrown on the King of Scots by Gray's plan, and this she liked much. She knew the unremitting efforts of France and Spain to gain the young king; and felt assured that her only safeguard would be an "association" between her own kingdom and Scotland, from which Mary should be entirely excluded; and the basis of which should be the defence of the Reformed religion against the perpetual attacks of the Roman Catholics in Europe.

There were some circumstances of recent occurrence which greatly strengthened her in this course. Father Crichton, a Jesuit, happening to be on his voyage to Scotland from Flanders, the vessel was chased by pirates, and he was observed to tear some papers and cast them away; but the wind blew them back into the ship: they were picked up, put together, and found to contain a proposal for an invasion of England by Spain and the Duke of Guise. As one object proposed here, and in all such plots, was the delivery of the Queen of Scots and the dethronement of Elizabeth, their constant recurrence was now met by an "association" for the protection of the English queen's government and life, first proposed by

Leicester, and eagerly subscribed by persons of all ranks and denominations. The terms of this association were afterwards solemnly approved by parliament, and an act passed for the safety of the queen's person. It stated that, if any invasion or rebellion should be made in her dominions, or any enterprise attempted against her person, by *or for* any person pretending a title to the crown after her death, she might, by a commission under the great seal, constitute a court for the trial of such offences, and which should have authority to pass sentence upon them. It added that, a judgment of "guilty" having been pronounced, it should immediately be made public; and that all persons against whom such sentence was passed, should be excluded from all claim to the crown, and be liable to be prosecuted to the death, with their aiders and abettors, by her majesty's subjects.[1] This league was evidently most unjust towards the Scottish queen, as it made her responsible, and liable to punishment, for the actions of persons over whom she had no control. She saw this; and at once declared that "the association" had no other object than indirectly to compass her ruin. But if alarming to Mary, it was proportionably gratifying to Elizabeth. She persuaded herself that, if her subjects thus united to protect her person, and preserve the Reformed faith, she ought vigorously to second their efforts; and this inclined her to look graciously on Gray. The measures, therefore, proposed by him were adopted. It was resolved to undermine Arran, as the first step for the restoration of the banished lords; and the other objects, it was trusted, would follow. To co-operate with Gray, Sir Edward Wotton was chosen to succeed Davison as ambassador in Scotland. He was a man of brilliant wit and insinuating address, a great sportsman, an adept in hunting and "woodcraft;" and these qualities, with a present of eight couple of the best hounds, and some choice horses, would, it was believed, entirely gain the heart of the young king. Wotton, too, as we learn from Sir James Melvil, was a deep plotter, and capable of the darkest designs, whilst to the world he seemed but an elegant, light-hearted, and thoughtless man of fashion.

Having laid these schemes for the ruin of his captive sovereign and of Arran his friend, the Master of Gray returned to the Scottish court, and received the thanks of the king, and his still all-powerful favourite, for the success with which he had conducted his negotiations.[2] To disarm suspicion, it was judged prudent that, for some time, all should go on serenely. Elizabeth wrote in flattering terms to Arran. She, at the same time, commanded the banished lords to remove from Newcastle into the interior;[3] and, in return for this, Gray had the satisfaction of assuring her that he found the king his master in so loving a disposition towards her, that he could not feel more warmly were he her natural son. He was equally successful in at once creating a breach between Mary and James. The just and merited contempt with which Fontenay the French ambassador had stigmatised Gray's base desertion of that princess, furnished him with a subject of complaint to the king and council; and he so artfully represented the dangerous consequences which must follow "an association" between the young king and his mother, that it was unanimously resolved it should never take place.[4]

This was a great point gained; and, to secure further success, he implored Elizabeth and her ministers to humour James for the present, by entirely casting off Angus and the exiled lords, whose despair was great when they found the predicament in which they stood. They appealed in urgent terms

[1] Carte, vol. iii. p. 587.

[2] MS. Letter, Master of Gray to Elizabeth, January 24, 1584-5. Ibid., Colvile to Walsingham, December 31, 1584. Also Papers of Master of Gray, p. 41, Master of Gray to Walsingham, January 24, 1584-5.

[3] MS., State-paper Office, Colvile to Walsingham, December 31, 1584.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Master of Gray, under the title of *Le Lievreau*, to Elizabeth.

to Walsingham; declared that even now, if the queen would say the word, they would break across the Border, surprise the person of the king, and chase Arran with ignominy from the country. Everything was ready for such an effort, and their friends only waited their arrival. But their proposal for an irruption was coldly received. Walsingham wrote to them, that her majesty, seeing the hard success of the late enterprise at Stirling, was doubtful some like plot might have like issue; and preferred a more temperate system of mediation, in Scottish affairs, to a more violent course.[1] The exiles, therefore, submitted; and James and Arran, exulting in their success, recommenced their persecution of the Kirk.

All ministers were compelled, on penalty of deprivation, to subscribe the acts of parliament which established the Episcopal form of government; forbidden to hold the slightest intercourse with their brethren who had fled for conscience' sake; and even prosecuted, if they dared to pray for them.[2] This extreme severity appears to have been followed by a very general submission to the obnoxious acts; and as it was followed up by the removal of the banished lords into the interior of England, and a prohibition of any Scottish minister from preaching, publicly or privately, in that realm, the cause was considered at the lowest ebb. A letter, written at this time by David Hume, one of the exiles, from Berwick, to Mr James Carmichael, a recusant brother of the Kirk, gave some details which carried sorrow to the hearts of the brave little remnant which still stood out against the court. It told, in homely but expressive phrase, that all the ministers betwixt Stirling and Berwick, all Lothian, and all the Merse, had subscribed, with only ten exceptions; amongst whom, the most noted were Patrick Simpson and Robert Pont; that the Laird of Dun, the most venerable champion of the Kirk, had so far receded from his primitive faith as to have become a pest to the ministry in the north; that John Durie, who had so long resisted, had "*cracked his curple*"[3] at last, and closed his mouth; that John Craig, so long the coadjutor of Knox, and John Brande, his colleague, had submitted; that the pulpits in Edinburgh were nearly silent,—so fearful had been the defection,—except, said he, a very few, who sigh and sob under the cross. His own estates, he added, had been forfeited, his wife and children beggared; and yet he might be grateful he was alive, though in exile, for at home terror occupied all hearts. No man, said he in conclusion, while he lieth down, is sure of his life till day.[4]

This miserable picture was increased in its horrors by the violent proceedings of Arran against all connected with the banished lords, by his open contempt of the laws, and the shameful venality of his government. His pride, his avarice, his insolence to the ancient nobility, and impatience of all who rivalled him in the king's affections, made his government intolerable; and the Master of Gray, beginning to find that he was looked upon with suspicion by this daring man, concluded that the moment had come for the mortal struggle between them.

At this time, Sir Edward Wotton, the English ambassador, arrived in Edinburgh. He was instructed to congratulate James on his wise determination to break off "the association" with his mother the captive queen, and to encourage him to enter into a firm league with England. The ambassador was also directed by Elizabeth to hold out to the Scottish king good hopes of a pension; but Walsingham, her prudent secretary, advised him not rashly to name the sum set down in his instructions, as its small sound might rather do harm than good.[5] As

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Colvile, January 10, 1584-5.

[2] Spottiswood, p. 336.

[3] "Cracked his curple." Curple, Scots; *i.e.*, crupper; meaning that the crupper had broken, and Durie, saddle and all, had come violently to the ground.

[4] MS. Letter in Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1528.

[5] MS., State-paper Office, minute, Walsingham to Wotton, May 23, 1585.

he found opportunity, he was to sound the king, also, on the subject of his marriage, naming the King of Denmark's daughter; and to assure him that his deep animosity against the banished lords was, in her opinion, immoderate and unjust. Last summer, she said, the Earl of Arran had, in his letters to her, accused them of a conspiracy against his life; and now, recently, she had investigated a similar story brought up by James's ambassador, the justice-clerk: but both tales, in the end, proved so weak and groundless, that she had good cause to think them maliciously devised to serve some end.[1]

Such were Wotton's open instructions; and as he seconded all he said by a present of eight couple of buck-hounds, and brought some noble horses for the royal stud, James received him with the youthful boisterous delight which such gifts usually produced in the royal mind. But the ambassador had a darker and more secret commission. During Gray's late stay at the court of England, he had contrived, with the approval of Elizabeth and the assistance of Walsingham, a plot for the destruction of Arran; and Bellenden, the justice-clerk, who had recently visited England, had been prevailed on by the queen to join it. Wotton was now sent down to take the management; and at the moment when he arrived, he found the Master of Gray deliberating with his brother-conspirators whether it were best to seize and *discourt*[2] their enemy, or to assassinate him. The Lord Maxwell, now best known by the title of Earl of Morton, had joined the plot, having a mortal feud with Arran; and it is not improbable the more violent course would have been chosen, when Gray received, by the hands of Wotton, a letter from Elizabeth, recommending them to spare him. Wotton next day wrote thus to Walsingham:—

"By my letter that myself did deliver to the Master of Gray from her majesty, their purpose is altered, at her majesty's request, to deal with him by violence; notwithstanding, upon the least occasion that shall be offered, they mean to make short work with him."[3] Gray, also, on the same day, addressed a letter to the English secretary, assuring him that he would comply with the queen's wishes, and not resort to violence, except he saw some hazard to his own life. Adding, emphatically and truly, as to his own character "When life is gone, all is gone to me."[4]

In the midst of these intrigues, all was bustle and pleasure at the Scottish court. The king hunted, feasted, and made progresses to his different palaces and the seats of his nobility. The ambassador, in whose society he took much delight, attended him on all his expeditions; occasionally mingling state affairs with the chase, or the masque, or the banquet; recommending the speedy adjustment of the league with Elizabeth; sounding him lightly on the point of his marriage; touching on the melancholy divisions amongst his nobility, which were increased by his continued severity to the banished lords; and sometimes adverting, with extreme caution, and in general terms, to the delicate subject of the promised pension. To the league with England, James shewed the strongest inclination. It appeared to him, he said, most wise and necessary that the "confederacy" which had recently been entered into by the various Roman Catholic princes, to prosecute the professors of the Reformed faith, should be met by a union of the Protestant powers in their own defence; and when the various heads of this treaty, transmitted by Walsingham to Wotton, were laid before him, they met with his cordial approbation.[5]

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Instructions to Sir Edward Wotton, April 1585.

[2] To *discourt*; a phrase not unusual in the letters of this time; meaning to banish any minister from the king's presence and councils.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, May 31, 1585.

[4] Ibid., Master of Gray to Walsingham, May 31, 1585.

[5] Ibid., Wotton to Walsingham, June 5, 1585. Ibid., June 7, 1585, Heads of the League. Ibid., Walsingham to Wotton, June 27, 1585. Also ibid., Thomas Miller to Archibald Douglas, July 8, 1585.

On his marriage he shewed no disposition to speak with seriousness; and Gray assured Wotton that to deal lightly in that matter would be best policy, his young master having no inclination to match himself at this moment. His mind was wholly engrossed with his pastimes, hunting, and his buckhounds. Of this passion, a ludicrous outbreak occurred shortly before Wotton's arrival. James, at the end of a sharp and successful run, calling for a cup of wine, drank to all his dogs; and, in particular, selecting and taking the paw of an old hound, named Tell True, who had greatly distinguished himself, he thus apostrophised his favourite:—"Tell True, I drink to thee above all my hounds; and would sooner trust thy tongue than either Craig or the bishop." Craig was the royal chaplain, and the prelate, Montgomery bishop of Glasgow. This anecdote was reported again to the banished ministers of the Kirk; and mourned over more seriously, and as pointing to a deeper depravity, than it seems to have indicated.[1]

Wotton was pleased to find that James continued constant in his resolution not to enter into any association with the captive queen; but, on the other hand, there were two subjects on which the young monarch was immovable,—his love for Arran, and his enmity to the banished Protestant lords and their ministers. These were most serious impediments in the way of the negotiation; and as the conspirators suspected that Arran was already intriguing with France, to traverse the league with England, many secret conversations took place between the English ambassador and the conspirators, as to the propriety of cutting off this powerful favourite at once, before he should do more mischief. Wotton duly and minutely communicated what passed at such interviews to Walsingham and Elizabeth; and although the letters are in many places written in cipher, and wherever the intended murder is directly mentioned, the words have been partially scored out, still, fortunately for the truth, we have a key to the cipher, and the erasure is often legible. Strange and revolting as it may sound to the ears of modern jurisconsults, it is nevertheless certain that the Lord Justice-clerk Bellenden, the late ambassador to England, and the second highest criminal judge in the country, promised Wotton to find an assassin of Arran, if he would engage that his royal mistress would protect him. Wotton was much puzzled with this, and still more embarrassed when he received a private visit from the proposed murderer himself, who figures in his letter as 38, and appears to have been Douglas provost of Lincluden.[2] The English ambassador had been carefully warned not to implicate Elizabeth by any promises, but to leave the matter to themselves; and as it is curious to observe how, in those times, an ambassador informed a secretary of state of an intended assassination, and probed his mind as to the encouragement which should be held out, it may be interesting to give some short passages of his letter to Walsingham. "The Tuesday, in the morning, 38 came likewise to me, that used, in effect, the same discourse that —— had done before, all tending to a necessity of ——; which, for the weal of the realms, should be done so that the doers of it have thanks for their labour. I propounded to him, whether he might not be better *discourted* by way of justice. 'Yea,' quoth he, 'worthily for twenty offences; but the king will not admit such proceedings.' Then I asked if 20 [Morton] might not attempt it, seeing he was already engaged; but that, for want of secrecy, he said, and distance, was full of danger. At last I perceived, by his speech, that himself was to do it. . . . The thing he requires, as he saith, is to have thanks for his labours, and for his good affection he bears to her majesty; and if he fortune to despatch it, that he be relieved with some money, to support

[1] Calderwood MS., British Museum, fol. 1528, David Hume to Mr James Carmichael, March 20, 1584-5.

[2] MS. Letter, Wotton to Walsingham, June 9, 1585. Caligula, C. viii. fol. 109.

him in the estate of a gentleman, till he were able to recover the king's favour again; and this I trust, quoth he, 14 [the Earl of Leicester] and 15 [Mr Secretary] will not deny. In general speeches, I told him that your honours were personages that had him in special recommendation. . . . I told him I would make relation of this matter to your honours: and he said he would write himself to Mr Secretary; and so praying me, if I did write aught, to commit his name to cipher, we departed."[1] This is a very shocking picture; but the quiet way in which the intended murderer of Arran talked of his projected deed is, perhaps, less abhorrent than Wotton's own words to the justice-clerk, when this dignitary of the law pleaded the necessity of cutting him off, and offered to provide the man to do it. "I paused a while," so Wotton wrote to Walsingham, "and remembering that I had no commission to persuade them, or animate therein, further than they saw cause themselves, specially in things of this nature, I durst not promise aught to encourage them; and therefore told him that I wist not what to say to the matter. To move her majesty I would not; neither did I think it fit for her to hear of it beforehand: to abuse them I would not; only, for mine own part, I was commanded to increase their credit with the king so long as I abode here. . . . I wished rather, if it might be, to have him discounted. . . . In the end, to be quit of him, (for, to be plain with your honour, I found myself in a great strait and desire not to be acquainted with the matter, which, if it must be done, I wished rather to have been done ere I came hither,) I asked what opinion 38 [the provost] had hereof, and wished him to confer with him, which he said he would, and departed."[2] With 38's opinion, and offer, in his own person, to finish the business, we are already acquainted. But it is needless to get further involved in the meshes of this conspiracy, from which Arran escaped at this time, by his own vigilance and the coldness of the ambassador, who would fain have insured the profits of success, without the responsibility of failure.

In the meantime Wotton had completely succeeded in the principal and avowed object of his mission. James had determined that the proposed league between England and his kingdom, for the defence of religion, should be concluded. He had revised and amended the various articles; and, with the view of bringing forward the subject, had assembled a convention of his nobility at St Andrews, when an event occurred which threatened to throw all into confusion. This was the slaughter of Lord Russell in a Border affray, which took place at a meeting, or day of truce, as it was called, between Sir John Foster and Kerr of Fernyhirst, the wardens of the middle marches.[3] There is good reason to believe that this unfortunate affair was wholly unpremeditated, for so Foster himself declared in his letter, written to Walsingham the day after;[4] but as Fernyhirst happened to be the intimate friend of Arran, it instantly occurred to the crafty diplomacy of the English secretary, and Wotton the ambassador,[5] that a good handle was given by the death of Russell to procure the disgrace of this hated minister. Foster, therefore, was directed to draw up a paper, the purport of which was to shew that the attack had been preconcerted;[6] and Wotton did not scruple to declare to the young king that one of the bravest noblemen of England had been murdered by the contrivance of Arran and Fernyhirst.

James, who was cast down at this interruption of the league, and unpre-

[1] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 195, Wotton to Walsingham, June 1, 1585. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, July 29, 1585.

[2] MS. Letter, British Museum, fol. 195. Caligula, C. viii., June 1, 1585.

[3] July 28.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Sir John Foster to Walsingham, July 28.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, July 31, 1585, St Andrews.

[6] MS., State-paper Office, B.C., Sir John Foster's Reasons to prove that the murder of Lord Russell was intended. This paper probably misled Camden, who gives an exaggerated account of the whole dispute. Kennet, vol. ii. p. 505.

pared for the violence of Wotton, could not conceal or command his feelings, but shed tears like a child, protested his own innocence, and wished all the lords of the Borders dead, provided Lord Russell were alive again. Nor were these mere words: Arran was imprisoned in the castle of St Andrews; Fernyhirst was threatened to be sent to stand his trial in England; and a strict investigation into the whole circumstances of the alleged murder took place. But the result rather evinced the innocence than established the guilt of Fernyhirst. Arran, meanwhile, bribed the Master of Gray, who procured his imprisonment at St Andrews to be exchanged for a nominal confinement to his own castle at Kinneil; and this scheme for the ruin of the court favourite bid fair, by its unexpected result, to re-establish his influence over the young king, and increase his power.[1]

All this fell heavily on Wotton and Walsingham. Arran had resumed his intrigues with France; it was believed that he had adopted the interests of the imprisoned queen, who, as we shall immediately see, was now busily engaged in organising that great plot for the invasion of England and her own delivery from captivity, which was known by the name of Babington's Conspiracy. At the same moment Burghley and Walsingham, who, by intercepting Mary's letters, had discovered her designs against their royal mistress, were occupied in weaving those toils around Mary, and possessing themselves of those proofs of her guilt, by which they trusted to bring her to the scaffold. It was to them, therefore, of the utmost consequence that the league between England and Scotland should be concluded before they made their great effort against Mary; that the young king should be bound to Elizabeth by ties for mutual defence and the maintenance of the established religion; and that Arran, and French interests and intrigues, should not repossess their power over his mind. Yet the only counterpoise to Arran in James's affections lay in the Master of Gray, their great tool and partisan; and he had betrayed them. There could not be a doubt that Arran owed to him his late deliverance from prison. Gray had proved false, too, at the critical moment when he was privy to all their schemes against this favourite; so that it became equally hazardous to trust him or to throw him off. What, then, was to be done? It was necessary to act rapidly—to act decidedly; and yet it was almost impossible for Elizabeth's ministers to make a single move against Arran without the fear of failure. From this difficulty they were delivered by the fertile brain and flagitious principles of the very man who had so recently betrayed them—the Master of Gray. He, too, had his misgivings as to the insecurity of the ground on which he stood, and in his dilemma sought the advice of Archibald Douglas, now in banishment in England, the intimate friend of Walsingham, and equally familiar with the party of the exiled lords and the expatriated ministers of the Kirk; who, since the fall of Morton, had found a retreat in England. To this man—who had been stained by the murder of Darnley, and since then engaged in innumerable plots, sometimes for, and sometimes against, the queen-mother—Gray addressed a singular letter, which yet remains, in which he laid open his secret heart, and required his advice, as the friend he loved best in the world. He told him frankly that the Queen of England had deserted and almost ruined him. It was by her advice, and relying upon her promises of support, that he had matched himself against Arran; that he had sought Arran's life, and Arran his: and now that he was reduced to a strait, where were all her promises? To continue to deal frankly with her was impossible; and must lead to his overthrow. What parties, then, were left to be embraced?—Arran, the imprisoned queen, the

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, July 29 and 30, 1585; also ibid. same to same, Aug. 6 and 7, 1585, St Andrews; and ibid. Aug. 13, 1585, same to same; and ibid. Aug. 19, 1585, same to same; and ibid. Aug. 21, 1585, same to same.

French politics, the Roman Catholic interests in Europe? This was impossible. Arran, although obliged to him for his recent escape, was the falsest of men, and never to be long trusted; Arran knew, too, that he would have taken his life. As to the Scottish queen, he (Gray) could never hope to be trusted by Mary after deserting her; and his perfidy was perfectly known to the whole body of the Catholics. One party only remained, by uniting himself with which a revolution might be effected in Scotland: the party of the banished lords, and their expatriated friends, the ministers of the Kirk. If Angus, Mar, and the Master of Glammis, could make up their differences with their exiled brethren, Lords Claud and John Hamilton, with whom they were still at feud, and unite in invading Scotland, there would be little doubt of a strong diversion in their favour. To them Gray said he would promise all his influence; it might happen, too, that he would find means to rid them of Arran; but as to this he would make no stipulation. Yet, if the deed could still be done so secretly that his knowledge of the "doer" should not be suspected, he would still make the attempt. At all events, they should be joined by Bothwell and Lord Hume; and he could promise, also, he thought, for Cessford. He concluded his letter by assuring Douglas that this was the only plan left which had the slightest likelihood of success; that, if the exiled noblemen were ever to make the attempt, now was the time when he would promise them they should muster at least two to one against their enemies; and he ended his letter with these emphatic words, "Persuade yourself, if the banished lords come down, the king shall either yield or leave Scotland."[1]

This new plot was readily embraced by the outlawed lords and the ministers of the Kirk, and warmly encouraged by Wotton, the English ambassador, who immediately communicated it to Walsingham, in a letter from Dumbarton, whither he had accompanied the young king upon a hunting party. The Master of Gray had sought him out, he said, and informed him that he was now convinced they had run all this while a wrong course in seeking to disgrace Arran with the king, whose love towards him was so extreme that he would never suffer a hair of his head to fall to the ground, if he might help it. It was evident, he continued, that as long as Arran should remain in favour with the king, it would be impossible to bring home the lords by fair means; that, unless they might be restored, the league could neither be sure, nor the Master of Gray, and the rest of his party, in safety: for Arran, recovering the king's person, would be able, with his credit, to ruin them, and divert the king from the queen; or, finding his affection towards her irremovable, would not stick to convey him into France. Wotton then proceeded to inform Walsingham of Gray's new plot. It was the advice, he said, of this experienced intriguer that her majesty, having so good occasion ministered by the death of my Lord Russell, should pretend to take the matter very grievously, and refuse to conclude the league for this time. She might then let slip the lords, (meaning Angus and his associates,) who, with some support of money, and their friends in Scotland, might take Arran, and seize on the king's person; in which exploit Gray promised them the best aid he and his faction could give. Gray added, that if Walsingham found this overture well liked at the English court, he would direct a special friend of his and the exiled lords very shortly into England, who might confer with Angus and the rest about the execution of the plot. "This," continued Wotton, addressing Walsingham,[2] "was the effect of Gray's whole speech,

[1] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 222, Master of Gray to Archibald Douglas, August 14, 1585.

[2] State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, Dumbarton, August 25, 1585. This letter is written partly in cipher; but I quote it from the contemporary decipher written above each character or number.

saving that, in the end, he said, in answer of an objection I made, that he would undertake this thing, being *alone*, to bring the league to a perfect conclusion."

This letter was written on the 25th of August; and so actively did Gray proceed with his plot, that, within a week after, it had assumed a more serious shape. In Scotland he had gained the Earl of Morton, formerly Lord Maxwell, a powerful Border baron, who had been suspected to be in the interest of Arran. In England, not only Angus, Mar, Glammis, and their friends were secured as actors, but also the Lords Claud and John Hamilton, the mortal enemies of Arran, who had remained in banishment since the year 1579, when they were forfeited for the murder of the Regents Moray and Lennox. These two noblemen agreed to a reconciliation with Angus and his party, with whom they had been at feud, and determined to unite against Arran.

Wotton, the English ambassador, lent to all this his active assistance; and his letters to Walsingham, which are still preserved, present us with an interesting picture of the growth of the conspiracy.[1] Some time before this, the Earl of Morton, who was warden of the West Borders, and whom few noblemen in Scotland could surpass in military power and experience, had incurred the resentment of the king by an attack upon the Laird of Johnston, in which he slew Captain Lammie, who commanded a company of the royal forces which James had sent to reinforce Johnston. This enraged the king, who, by the advice of Arran, determined to lead an army against the insurgent;[2] and at this crisis of personal danger, overtures being made to Morton, he, to secure his safety, readily embraced the offers of Gray, and joined the conspiracy.[3] This was a great point gained, and gave the utmost satisfaction to Wotton and Walsingham, to whom it was immediately communicated.[4]

But although nothing could exceed the activity and talent (if we may use this term) of Gray and Wotton, in the management of this plot, their efforts were counteracted by the coldness and delays of Elizabeth, and the reviving influence of Arran. This nobleman, still nominally confined to his house at Kinneil, on the charge of being accessary to Lord Russell's death, was yet daily recovering his power over the king's mind: and it was now well known that, having been deceived and thrown off by Elizabeth, he had embraced the interests of France, from which government he had recently received a large supply of money.[5] Under his protection, Holt, Dury, and Bruce, three noted Jesuits, were secretly harboured in Scotland,[6] and busily engaged in intrigues for the restoration of the queen-mother, and the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic faith.[7] Nor was this all. Arran, as we have already seen, could organise plots, and frame secret schemes for surprise and assassination, as well as his enemies. He had been too early educated in the sanguinary and unscrupulous policy of these times not to be an adept in such matters; and whilst Gray and Wotton were weaving their meshes round him, they knew that counterplots were being formed against themselves, of the existence of which they were certain, although they could not detect the agents. The two great factions into which the state of Scotland was divided were thus mutually on their guard, and jealously watching each other; both armed, both intent on their dark purposes, busy in gaining partisans and

[1] State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 1, 1585. This letter is greatly defaced, by some person having erased the proper names and emphatic words; but enough is left to shew the nature of the plot, and the full approval of Wotton. Also, State-paper Office, same to same.

[2] Ibid., September 30, 1585.

[3] Historie of James the Sext, pp. 212, 213. State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 30, 1585, Stirling.

[4] State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 30, 1585, Stirling.

[5] Original State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 4, 1585, Stirling. Also same to same, August 21, 1585.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Original, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, Stirling, September 18, 1585.

in anticipating the designs of their opponents; so that it seemed a race who should soonest spring the mine which was to overwhelm and destroy their adversary.

In such circumstances, nothing could be more painful and precarious than the situation of Wotton, the English ambassador. He knew, and repeatedly wrote to Walsingham, that his life was in danger. His intrigues had been partially discovered by Arran. Colonel Stewart, the brother of that nobleman, and captain of the Royal Guard, had upbraided him for his perfidy before the king; and although the ambassador gave him the lie on the spot, the truth was too well known for any to be deceived by this bravado.[1] It was under the influence of such feelings that he thus addressed Walsingham:—"Though ye in England be slow in resolving, Arran and his faction sleep not out their time: for they are now gathering all the forces they can make, and, within three or four days, Arran meaneth to come to the court, and to possess himself of the king, in despite of the Queen of England, as he saith; which, if he do, I mean to retire myself to the Borders for the safety of my life, whereof I am in great danger, as my friends which hear the Stewarts' threatenings daily advertise me. Your honour knoweth what a barbarous nation this is, and how little they can skill of points of honour. Where every man carrieth a pistol at his girdle, (as here they do,) it is an easy matter to kill one out of a window or door, and no man able to discover who did it. Neither doth it go for payment with those men to say, I am an ambassador, and therefore privileged; for even their regents and kings have been subject to their violence.

"This notwithstanding," he continued, "I would not be so resolute to depart, if, by my tarrying, I might do her majesty any service. But I find the king so enchanted by Arran, and myself so hated of him, as I cannot hope to negotiate to any purpose so long as Arran shall be in court. If," he added, "the Queen of England would send down the lords, they will be able to work wonders here, and to remedy all inconvenients. If the Queen of England do it not, this country will be clean lost, and all her friends wrecked. Other hope to England than in them I see none; the king being young and easily carried, and most about him either Papists or Atheists."[2] In a second letter, written to Walsingham on the same day, Wotton added this emphatic paragraph:—

"The Master of Gray,[3] through our long English delay, findeth himself driven to a great strait. For the king presseth him greatly to meet with Arran, and threateneth that, unless he do it, he shall have just cause to suspect him. But the Master assureth me he will, by one means or other, avoid it, and will hold good these fourteen days. Therefore, what ye will do must be speedily done.

"I am not, for my own part," he added, "the greatest favourer of [violent courses,] and, therefore, have hitherto rather related other men's speeches and opinions than given my advice. But now matters frame so overthwartly as I must needs conclude that no good can be done here, but by the [way] of ——;[4] which being used, you may bring even the proudest of us to [cry[5]] for misericorde on our knees."[6]

All was now ripe for execution of the plot. Morton had been gained, and his force was in readiness on the Border. Angus, Mar, and Glammis, with their friends, had, by the mediation of the banished ministers, been reconciled to the Lords Claud and John Hamilton. The Master of Gray, in the meantime, remained at court, and played into the hands of his brother

[1] State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 22, 1585.

[2] State-paper Office, September 22, 1585, Stirling, Wotton to Walsingham.

[3] Scored, but tolerably clear.

[4] Ciphers occur here. The word was probably "violence."

[5] I put [cry] in brackets, as the word is not clear in the original.

[6] State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 22, 1585, Stirling.

conspirators; watching his opportunities; taking every advantage against the opposite faction; communicating, through Wotton and Archibald Douglas, with the exiled lords and the ministers; and keeping up an intercourse with Morton, by the provost of Lincluden, a Douglas.[1] It was this same fierce partisan who, in the former conspiracy, had been pitched upon to put Arran to death;[2] and as Gray had declared to Douglas his resolution to "essay" the same again, if it could be quietly and secretly achieved, it is not improbable that the provost may have been again engaged to further the cause by assassinating this hated person. Such being the ripeness of all things, Wotton, who still remained at the Scottish court, although in daily danger of his life, wrote hastily to Walsingham, on the 5th of October, assuring him that the king had resolved to send his forces against Morton before the 20th of October, and would probably lead them in person. Arran, he added, was to be liberated; and if the lords meant to surprise him, and strike the blow with any hope of success, it must be done instantly.[3]

These arguments had the desired effect; and Elizabeth, being assured that no time was to be lost, commanded her ambassador to require an audience of the King of Scots, and make a peremptory demand for the delivery into her hands of Kerr of Fernyhirst, whom she stigmatised as the murderer of Lord Russell. It was certain that this would be refused; and her object was to afford a pretext for the retirement of Wotton from the Scottish court, at the moment when the conspiracy, which he had organised with such persevering activity, was to take effect.[4] But matters framed themselves otherwise. Early in October, the banished lords, Angus, Mar, and the Master of Glammis, who were then in London, received Elizabeth's permission to set out on their enterprise; but by the advice of the ministers of the Kirk, their companions in exile, they first held an exercise of humiliation at Westminster, and with many tears, (so writes the historian of the Kirk,) besought God to strengthen their arm, and grant them success against their enemies.[5] They then set forward, accompanied by their ministers, Mr Andrew Melvil, Mr Patrick Galloway, and Mr Walter Balcanquel; and pressing forward to Berwick, met there with the Hamiltons and their forces.

These movements could not be concealed; and the tidings flying quickly into Scotland, became known to the king and the English ambassador at the same moment. It was a stirring and remarkable crisis. James by this time was fully aware of the intrigues of Wotton; and resolving to make him a hostage for his own security, gave orders to seize the ambassador in his house, and carry him with the army, which was then on the point of marching against Morton. Wotton, however, received intimation of his danger: at nightfall he threw himself upon a fleet horse, galloped to Berwick, and from that city wrote, in much agitation, to Walsingham and the queen, declaring that he had been plunged into the greatest difficulty by the reports of the advance of the lords; that he knew the king meant to arrest him; and that he had preferred rather to flee from Scotland, and peril her majesty's displeasure, than to remain and thus bring ruin upon the common cause.[6]

All was now confusion at court. Arran, breaking from his ward, hurried from Kinneil to court, and rushing into the young king's presence, declared that the banished lords were already in Scotland, and rapidly coming forward with their forces; accused the Master of Gray as the author of

[1] State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 30, 1585, Stirling. Also another letter, written on the same day, from the same to the same.

[2] MS. Letter, Wotton to Walsingham, June 9, 1585, Caligula, C. viii.

[3] State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, October 5, 1585, Stirling.

[4] Copy, State-paper Office, October 12, 1585, Wotton to Walsingham. Also draft, October 11, 1585, Walsingham to Wotton.

[5] Calderwood, MS. Hist., Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1545.

[6] State-paper Office, October 15, 1585, Berwick, Wotton to Elizabeth; same to Walsingham.

the whole conspiracy, and urged James to send for him instantly, and put him to death.[1] Gray was then absent from court, raising his friends in Perthshire, and was thrown into perplexity and agitation on receiving the king's message. If he disobeyed it, he dreaded the overthrow of the plot, and the retreat of Angus and his friends; if he returned to court, he cast himself within the toils of his mortal enemy Arran. Yet, choosing the boldest, which in such a crisis is generally the most successful course, he braved the peril, rode back to court, entered the royal presence, defended himself from the accusation, and was so graciously received, that Arran and his faction had determined, as their last hope, to stab him even in the king's presence,[2] when a messenger arrived in fiery haste with the news that the advanced parties of the banished lords had been seen within a mile of Stirling. They had first met at Kelso, separated to raise their men, concentrated their whole troops at Falkirk on the 31st October, and from this marched towards that city, at the head of eight thousand men. To resist such a force would have been absurd. Arran knew that his head was the only mark they shot at; that he was surrounded by enemies within as well as without the town; and that his life was not safe for a moment. As the only resource left him, therefore, he fled secretly from Stirling, accompanied by a single horseman. His retreat was followed by the instant occupation and plunder of the town by Angus and his forces; whilst Montrose, Crawford, and the other lords of the opposite faction threw themselves, as their last resource, into the castle; which (to use the Master of Gray's own expression) was in a manner crammed full of great personages with the king — some friends, some enemies.[3] Preparations for a siege were now commenced; and the lords had already set up their banners against the "spur," or principal bastion, when the king sent out the Master of Gray with a flag of truce, to demand the cause of their coming. They replied, it was to offer their duty to his majesty, and kiss his hands: to which it was answered, that the king was not at that moment solicitous of an interview; but if they would retire for a brief space, their lands and honours should be restored. Still, however, they insisted on a personal interview, and James declared his readiness to agree to it on three conditions: safety to his own person; no innovation to be made in the state; and an assurance for the lives of such persons as he should name. To the two first they instantly consented; to the last they replied, that as they were the injured persons, and their enemies were about the king, they must, for their own security, have them delivered into their hands, with the castles and strengths of the realm.[4] This negotiation, which was conducted by Gray, the arch-contriver of the whole plot, could only terminate in one way. James was forced to submit: the gates were opened; the Earls of Montrose, Crawford, and Rothes, with Lord Down, Sir William Stewart, and others, made prisoners; and the banished lords conducted into the king's presence. On their admission they fell on their knees; and Lord Arbroath, the head of the house of Hamilton, taking precedency from his near alliance to the crown, entreated his majesty's gracious acceptance of their duty, and declared that they were come in the most humble manner to solicit his pardon. It was strange to see men who, a few hours before, with arms in their hands, had dictated terms of submission to their sovereign, now sue so submissively for mercy: but the scene was well acted on both sides; and James, an early adept in hypocrisy, performed his part with much address.

"My lord," said he to Hamilton, "I never saw you before; but you were a faithful servant of the queen my mother, and of all this company have

[1] Relation of the Master of Gray, by Bannatyne Club, p. 59.
[2] Ibid. [3] Ibid. p. 60.
[4] Relation of the Master of Gray. Papers of the Master of Gray, printed by Bannatyne Club, p. 60.

been the most wronged. But for the rest of you, (casting his glance over the circle on their knees,) if you have been exiles, was it not your own fault? And as for you, Francis, (he continued, turning to Bothwell,) who has stirred up your unquiet spirit to come in arms against your prince? When did I ever wrong thee? To you all, who I believe meant no harm to my person, I am ready, remembering nothing that is past, to give my hand and heart; on one condition, however, —that you carry yourselves, henceforth, as dutiful subjects."[1]

This interview was followed by measures which shewed that these apparently submissive lords were not disposed to lose their opportunity. Arran was proclaimed a traitor at the market-place, and in the king's name; the royal guard altered, and its command given to the Master of Glammis; the castle of Dumbarton delivered to Lord Arbroath; that of Edinburgh to Coldingknowes; Tantallon to Angus; and Stirling to Mar. On the same day, a pacification and remission was published in favour of the exiles, who now ruled everything at their pleasure. All faults were solemnly forgiven; and the whole of the measures lately carried into effect with such speed and success declared to be done for the king's service.[2]

Immediately after the seizure of Stirling, the Master of Gray communicated the entire success of the plot to the English court, by letters to the queen herself, Archibald Douglas, and Secretary Walsingham. He assured the English secretary that the banished men were in as good favour as they ever enjoyed: nothing was now required but that Elizabeth should send an ambassador, and the intended league between the two kingdoms would be concluded without delay.[3] The queen, accordingly, despatched Sir William Knolles, who had audience at Linlithgow on the 23d November, and was received by James with much courtesy. The king professed himself to be entirely at her majesty's devotion; declared he was ready to join in league with England, both in matters of religion and civil policy; and that, although at first offended at the sudden invasion of Angus and his friends, he was now satisfied that they sought only their own restitution, and, indeed, had found them so loving and obedient, that he had rather reason to bless God so great a revolution had been effected without bloodshed, than to regret anything that had happened. Knolles, too, as far as he had an opportunity of judging, considered these declarations sincere. He observed no distrust on the part either of the lords or their sovereign. They kept no guard round him, but suffered him to hunt daily with a moderate train; and as Arran had fled to the west coast, and Montrose, Crawford, and the rest of that party were in custody, no fear of change or attack seemed to be entertained.[4]

Such was Knolles's opinion; although, in the end of his letter, he hinted that the king might dissemble according to his custom—a suspicion which next day seemed to have increased.[5] Apparently, however, these misgivings were without foundation; for a parliament assembled shortly after at Linlithgow, in which it was unanimously resolved that there should be a strict league concluded with Elizabeth.[6] On this occasion, the king, if we may judge from his address to the three estates, expressed extraordinary devotedness to England, and the most determined hostility to the Roman Catholics. He alluded to the confederating together of the "bastard Christians," (to use his own words,) meaning, as he said, the Papists, in a league, which they termed holy, for the subversion of true religion in all

[1] Spottiswood, pp. 342, 343.
[2] Relation of the Master of Gray, p. 61.
[3] State-paper Office, Master of Gray to Walsingham, November 6, 1585.
[4] State-paper Office, Mr William Knolles to Walsingham, Linlithgow, November 23, 1585.
[5] Ibid., Knolles to Walsingham, Linlithgow, November 24, 1585.
[6] Ibid., certified copy of the Act of Parliament authorising the King of Scots to make league with the Queen's Majesty of England, December 10, 1585.

realms through the whole world. These leagues, he observed, were composed of Frenchmen and Spaniards, assisted with the money of the King of Spain and the Pope, and must be resisted, if Protestants had either conscience, honour, or love of themselves. To this end, he was determined, he said, to form a counter-league, in which he was assured all Christian princes would willingly join; and as the Queen of England was not only a true Christian princess, but nearest to them of all others, in consanguinity, neighbourhood, and good-will, it was his fixed resolution to begin with her.[1] To second this, the king despatched Sir William Keith with a friendly message to the English queen, requesting her to send down an ambassador, by whose good offices the proposed treaty might be carried into effect;[2] and Randolph, whose veteran experience in Scottish diplomacy was considered as peculiarly qualifying him for such an errand, was intrusted with the negotiation. He arrived in Edinburgh on the 26th February, having been met at Musselburgh, six miles from the capital, by the justice-clerk, and a troop of forty or fifty gentlemen, many of them belonging to the royal household.

The English ambassador was prepared to find his mission one of no easy execution;[3] for in the interval between the parliament at Linlithgow and his arrival at court, the fair prospects anticipated by Gray and Knolles had become clouded. An ambassador had been sent from France, and was reported to have brought with him a freight of French crowns. Holt the Jesuit, and other brethren of that order, were still secretly harboured in the north, supported by Huntly, Montrose, Crawford, and other nobles of the Roman Catholic faith; the agents of the queen-mother were busy with their intrigues, both in Scotland and in England; and Morton, that powerful baron, whose union with Angus and the Hamiltons had so recently turned the scale against Arran, presuming upon his recent success, openly professed the Roman Catholic faith, and caused mass to be celebrated in the provost church of Lincluden.[4]

All these were ominous appearances; and although James had instantly summoned Morton, and imprisoned him in Edinburgh castle, yet the king was known to be so great a dissembler, that few trusted his professions.

Randolph had been instructed by his royal mistress to congratulate the monarch upon the quiet state of his realm; to express her willingness to proceed with the treaty, for a firm and lasting religious league between the two kingdoms, which had been interrupted; and to warn him against the intrigues of France. He was also to require the delivery of Fernyhirst, who, she still insisted, was guilty of the murder of Lord Russell; to urge James to prosecute Morton for his late audacious contempt of the law; to advise the severest measures against Arran, who still lurked in the west of Scotland; and to insist on the delivery of Holt, Brereton, and other Jesuits; or, at least, to their banishment from his dominions. In return for all this, should it be faithfully performed, Elizabeth declared her readiness to fix a yearly pension on the king, and to grant a solemn promise, under her hand and seal, that she would permit no measures to be brought forward against any title he might pretend to the succession to the English crown.[5]

On being admitted to an audience, which took place on the third day after his arrival, Randolph, at first, found nothing but smiles and fair weather at court. The king assured him that he felt himself bound to the queen his mistress as strictly as if she were his own sister; that he esteemed her advice the best he could possibly

[1] Copy, State-paper Office, the Scottish king's Speech concerning a League in Religion with England.

[2] State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, Berwick, February 24, 1585-6.

[3] Copy, State-paper Office, Roger Ashton to (as I conjecture) Walsingham, January 17, 1585-6.

[4] Spottiswood, p. 344. Copy, State-paper Office, Roger Ashton to Walsingham, January 17, 1585-6.

[5] Original draft, State-paper Office, principal points of Mr Randolph's Instructions.

receive, and meant, God willing, to follow it.[1] Having spoken this so loud that most that stood by could hear it, James, entering into more private talk, told him of the arrival of the French ambassador, and spoke slightingly of his youth and ignorance of Scotland and Scotsmen. This led to some remarks on the house of Guise, and the intrigues of the Jesuits; to which the king answered, he had but one God to serve; and as for the Papists, that Morton himself, and some others, would be arraigned within a few days. Before the audience was concluded Randolph exhibited a little packet, "curiously sealed and made up," which he gallantly pressed to his lips, and delivered to the young monarch. It was a private letter from Elizabeth, which James, stepping aside, read with every appearance of devotion; and, placing it in his bosom, declared that all his good sister's desires should be fulfilled.[2]

These fair professions, however, were not fully to be trusted; for Randolph, in a subsequent conversation with Secretary Maitland and Bellenden the justice-clerk, became aware that great offers had been made to the young king by France; and that, although the royal hand was, as yet, uncontaminated by French gold, the court necessities were so urgent that it was not certain how long this magnanimity might continue. These counter-intrigues, however, were for the present defeated; and the ambassador, with great address, procured the king's signature to the league with England, and sent Thomas Milles, his assistant and secretary, to present it to Elizabeth for her ratification.[3] Milles was, at the same time, instructed to warn the English queen to have special care, at that moment, of her own person; and to reveal the particulars of a conspiracy against her, which was then hatching in Scotland. On this delicate point the ambassador wrote both to Burghley and Walsingham: but he referred simply to Milles' verbal report, and added to the English secretary this ominous sentence: "The men and, perchance, the women are yet living, and their hearts and minds all one, that devised or procured the devilish mischiefs that hitherto, by God's providence, she hath escaped. You have heard, both out of Spain and France, what is to be doubted out of the Low Countries. I have seen what warning hath been given for her majesty to look unto herself; and, in the presence of God, I fear as much despite and devilishness from hence as from them all; though I judge the king as free as myself, and could himself be content that he were out of this country."[4]

These disclosures of Milles to Elizabeth unfortunately do not appear; but there can be no doubt that they were connected with that conspiracy afterwards known as "Babington's Plot." It is certain that this plot had its ramifications in Scotland; that the captive queen had still a powerful party in that kingdom, at the head of which was Lord Claud Hamilton; and many of her adherents were busily intriguing with France, Spain, and Rome. The league with England was distasteful to Secretary Maitland and a large portion of the nobility. They maintained, and with great appearance of reason, that the king, before he had been so readily induced to sign a treaty of so much importance, ought to have secured some commercial privileges to his subjects, similar to those enjoyed by them in France; that Elizabeth should have made some public and explicit declaration regarding their master's title to the English crown; and that the annuity which he was to receive ought to bear some proportion to the large offers of those foreign princes, which his adherence to England had compelled him to refuse. All this, they said, he had neglected; and, without consulting his council, had recklessly rushed into a treaty which

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to ——— (Walsingham?) March 2, 1585-6.

[2] Ibid.

[3] State-paper Office, April 1, 1586, Randolph to Lord Burghley, by Thomas Milles.

[4] State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, April 2, 1586.

he would speedily repent.[1] This threat seemed prophetic: on Milles's arrival with Elizabeth's signature to the league, James discovered that the pension, which, as first promised by Wotton, amounted to twenty thousand crowns, had dwindled down to four thousand pounds; and the same envoy brought the king a private letter, written with her own hand, in terms of such severe and sarcastic admonition, that it utterly disgusted and enraged him.[2] It was presented by Randolph, in an interview which he had with James in the garden of the palace; and, as he read it, the young monarch, colouring with anger, swore "by God" that, had he known what little account the queen would make of him, she should have waited long enough before he had signed any league, or disobliged his nobles, to reap nothing but disappointment and contempt.

This fit of disgust was fostered, as may easily be believed, by Secretary Maitland and his friends; and it required all the address of Randolph to soften the royal resentment and hold the king to his engagements. At last, however, everything was arranged, and the ambassador, in a letter to Walsingham, congratulating himself upon a speedy return home, advised this minister to be careful in the choice of his successor at the Scottish court. "Your honour knows," said he, "that *non ex omni ligno fit Mercurius;* and he has need of a long spoon that feeds with the devil."[3]

Having procured the young king's signature to the articles of the league, Randolph left the Scottish court; and in the succeeding month the negotiation was finally concluded by the commissioners of both countries, who met at Berwick.[4] In this important treaty, it was agreed between the Queen of England and the Scottish king, that they should inviolably maintain the religion now professed in both countries, against all adversaries, notwithstanding any former engagements to the contrary. If any invasion should be made into their dominions, or any injuries should be offered them by foreign princes or states, no aid was to be given to such foreign attack by either of the contracting parties, whatever league, affinity, or friendship might happen to exist between them and such foreign powers. If England were invaded by a foreign enemy, in any part remote from Scotland, the King of Scots promised, at Elizabeth's request, to send two thousand horse, or five thousand foot, to her assistance, but at her expense; and if Scotland were attacked, the queen was to despatch three thousand horse, or six thousand foot, to assist James; but if the invasion of England should take place within sixty miles of the Scottish Border, James engaged, without delay, to muster all the force he could, and join the English army. If Ireland should be invaded, all Scottish subjects were to be interdicted, under pain of rebellion, from passing over into that kingdom. All rebels harboured within either country were to be delivered up, or compelled to depart the realm; no contract was to be made by either of the princes, with any foreign state, to the prejudice of this league; all former treaties of amity between the predecessors of the two princes were to remain in force; and on the Scottish king's attaining the age of twenty-five he engaged that the "league should be confirmed by parliament; his sister, the English queen, promising the same for her part."[5] It will be observed that all consideration of the condition or interests of the unhappy Queen of Scots is studiously avoided, both by her son and by Elizabeth. Indeed, her name

[1] State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Walsingham, May 6, 1586. Also original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham's abridgment of Archibald Douglas's letters of the 5th, 6th, and 11th May.

[2] State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, Edinburgh, May 13, 1586.

[3] Ibid., May 28, 1586.

[4] Camden's Elizabeth, in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 513. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, June 24, 1586. Ibid., Proclamation at Berwick of the Commissioners, July 5, 1586.

[5] MS., State-paper Office, Principal points of the articles of the League, July 5, 1586.

does not appear to have been once alluded to during the whole of the transactions. It will, however, be seen by the sequel, that, although no reference was openly made to Mary, the main object of Elizabeth in completing this strict alliance with the son was to detect and defeat the intrigues and conspiracies of the mother.

The happy conclusion of this league was a matter of sincere congratulation to the English queen; but she had intrusted to Randolph another somewhat difficult negotiation. This was to induce James to recall and pardon the well-known Archibald Douglas, whom she had herself recently imprisoned, but who had purchased his freedom by betraying the secrets of the Scottish queen. This gentleman, with whose name and history we are already in some degree familiar, united the manners of a polished courtier to the knowledge of a scholar and a statesman. He was of an ancient and noble house: he had been for years the friend and correspondent of Burghley and Walsingham; and he was now in great credit with the English queen. But Douglas had a dark as well as a bright side; and exhibited a contradiction or anomaly in character, by no means unfrequent in those days: the ferocity of a feudal age, gilded, or lacquered over, by a thin coating of civilisation. Externally all was polish and amenity; truly and at heart the man was a sanguinary, fierce, crafty, and unscrupulous villain. He had been personally present at Darnley's murder, although he only admitted the foreknowledge of it: he had been bred as a retainer of the infamous Bothwell: he had afterwards been employed by the Scottish queen, whom he sold to her enemies; and Elizabeth's great purpose in now interceding for his return from her court to his own country was to use his influence with the young king against his mother and her faction. He now brought a letter written by that princess to the king in his favour;[1] and it is little to James's credit, that he speedily obtained all he asked. A mock trial was got up, a sentence of acquittal pronounced, and Douglas was not only restored to his estates and rank, but admitted into the highest confidence with the sovereign whose father he had murdered. Nay, strange to tell, James held a secret conversation with him on the dark subject of Darnley's assassination; and as Douglas instantly sent a report of it to Walsingham, we get behind the curtain. The king commanded all the courtiers to retire; and, finding himself alone with Douglas, after reading the Queen of England's letter, thus addressed him:—

"At your departure, I was your enemy; and now, at your returning, I am and shall be your friend. You are not ignorant what the laws of this realm are, and what best may agree with your honour to be done for your surety. I must confess her majesty's request in your favour to be honourable and favourable, and your desire to have come by assize[2] to be honest; and I myself do believe that you are innocent of my father's murder, except in foreknowledge and concealing; an fault so common in those days, that no man of any dealing could misknaw;[3] and yet so perilous to be revealed, in respect of all the actors of that tragedy, that no man, without extreme danger, could utter any speech thereof, because they did see it and could not amend it: and, therefore, I will impute unto you neither foreknowledge nor concealing; and desire that you will advise by my secretary what may be most agreeable to my honour and your surety in trial, and it shall be performed."[4] These are remarkable words, and probably come very near the truth as to the foreknowledge of the king's murder possessed by every man of any note or consequence in the court. It is evident the king kept at a distance from all direct mention of

[1] MS. draft, State-paper Office, Elizabeth to James, Scottish Royal Letters, April 6, 1586.

[2] To have come by assize; to be tried by a jury.

[3] Misknaw; be ignorant.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Walsingham, May 6, 1586.

his mother's name. The general expressions which he used may either infer that the queen must have known of the intended murder, but could not, without imminent peril, have revealed or prevented it, or that she knew and permitted it. As to Douglas's own active share in the murder, it was positively asserted by his servant on the scaffold, and at a moment when there could be no temptation to deny or disguise the truth, that he was present at the explosion, and returned from it covered with soil and dust.

CHAPTER V.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1586, 1587.

ELIZABETH, as has been already hinted, had a great purpose in view, when she concluded this league and sent Archibald Douglas into Scotland. Two months before, her indefatigable minister, Walsingham, had detected that famous conspiracy known by the name of "Babington's Plot," in which Mary was implicated, and for which she afterwards suffered. It had been resolved by Leicester, Burghley, and Walsingham, and probably by the queen herself, that this should be the last plot of the Scottish queen and the Roman Catholic faction; that the time had come when sufferance was criminal and weak; that the life of the unfortunate, but still active and formidable, captive was inconsistent with Elizabeth's safety and the liberty of the realm. Hence the importance attached to this league, which bound the two kingdoms together, in a treaty offensive and defensive, for the protection of the Protestant faith, and separated the young king from his mother. Hence the eagerness for the return and pardon of Archibald Douglas, who had sold himself to Elizabeth, betrayed the secrets of Mary, and now offered his influence over James to be employed in furthering this great design for her destruction.

It is now necessary to enter upon the history of this plot, and Mary's alleged connexion with it,—one of the most involved and intricate portions of the history of the two countries. To be clear, and prevent the mind from getting entangled in the inextricable meshes of Walsingham and his informers, it will be proper for a moment to look back. Mary had now been nineteen years a captive; and upon the cruelty and illegality of her imprisonment, during this long and dreary period, there can be but one opinion. She was seized and imprisoned during a time of peace, contrary to every feeling of generosity, and in flagrant violation of every principle of law and justice. On the one hand, it was the right and the duty of such a prisoner to attempt every possible means for her escape; on the other, it was both natural and just that the Catholic party in England and Scotland should have combined with France and Spain to deliver her from her captivity, and avenge upon Elizabeth such an outrage on the law of nations as the seizure of a free princess. But the same party regarded Elizabeth as a heretic, whose whole life had been obstinately opposed to the truth. Some of them went so far as to consider her an illegitimate usurper, whose throne belonged to the Queen of Scots. They had plotted, therefore,

not only for Mary's deliverance, but for the re-establishment of their own faith in England, and for Elizabeth's deposition; nay, some of them, mistaking fanaticism for religion, against Elizabeth's life. All these conspiracies continued more or less during the whole period of Mary's captivity, and had been detected by the vigilance of Elizabeth's ministers, acting through the system of private spies; one of the most revolting features of an age which regarded craft and treachery as necessary parts of political wisdom. With all these plots the Queen of Scots had been, in some degree, either directly or indirectly connected: her rival felt acutely (and such a feeling was the retributive punishment of the wrong she had committed) the misery of keeping so dangerous a prisoner; but up to this time, there seems to have been no allegation that Mary was implicated in anything affecting Elizabeth's life, in anything more, in short, than a series of plots continued at different times for her own escape. Nor did Elizabeth very highly resent them. So far at least from adopting the extreme measures to which she had been advised by many of her councillors, she had repeatedly entered into negotiations with her royal captive, in which she held out the hope of her liberty on the one hand; whilst Mary, on the other, promised not only to forsake all connexion with public affairs, and leave the government to her son, but to impart to her good sister the most valuable secret information. These scenes had been so repeatedly begun, and repeatedly broken off, that they had become almost matters of yearly form. On both sides, in all this, there was probably much suspicion and insincerity; but chiefly on the part of Elizabeth: for Mary, at last sinking under the sorrows of so long a captivity, and worn out by deferred hope, became ready to pay the highest price for freedom; to give up the world, to sink into private life, to sacrifice all except her religion and her title to the throne. It was on this principle that she was ready to enter into that agreement with her son, already alluded to, known by the name of "the association." By the terms of this, James was to continue king; his mother resigning her right into his hands, and taking up her residence, with an allowance according to her rank, either in England or Scotland. Elizabeth, to whom the whole design was communicated, and who was included as a party to the treaty, was to release the Scottish queen, resume with her the friendly relations which had been so often broken off, and receive in return such general good advice, and such secret revelations, as Mary could give consistently with fidelity to her friends.

Now, at the very time when this association seemed to be concluded; when the hopes of the unhappy captive were at the highest; when she was looking forward to her liberty with the delight "which the opening of the prison brings to them that are bound," the cup, for the hundredth time, was dashed from her lips. Throckmorton's treason occurred; a plot still involved in great obscurity. Parry's conspiracy also took place, which included an attempt against the life of the English queen; and the covenant, or "association," for the defence of Elizabeth's person, was concluded at the urgent instance of Leicester, by which "men of all degrees throughout England bound themselves, by mutual vows and subscriptions, to prosecute to the death all who should directly or indirectly attempt anything against their sovereign." It was in vain that Mary disclaimed all connexion with these plots, affirming passionately, and apparently sincerely, that it would be cruel to hold her responsible for all the wild attempts of the Roman Catholic faction who professed to be her friends, but did not inform her of their proceedings; in vain that she offered to sign the association for Elizabeth's safety, and act upon it as if she were her dearest sister. She was met by a cold refusal; the treaty for her freedom was abandoned; the Master of Gray, and Archibald Douglas, men

whom she had implicitly trusted, were bribed to betray her most private transactions; and, as the last and bitterest ingredient in her misery, her own son broke off all intercourse with her, threw himself into the arms of the English queen, and, by the "league" which we have just seen concluded, became the sworn pensioner of her enemy, and the avowed persecutor of that religion which she firmly believed to be the truth. Are we to wonder that, under such circumstances, she renounced her promises to Elizabeth, and, as a last resource, encouraged the Roman Catholics to resume their projects for the invasion of England, her delivery from captivity, and the restoration of what she believed the only true Church?

It is certain that, two years before this, in 1584, she had been cognisant of Throckmorton's plot, already alluded to, which had been got up by the English Catholic refugees in Spain and France for the invasion of England, the dethronement of Elizabeth, and her own delivery. One of the principal managers of this conspiracy was Thomas Morgan, a devoted Catholic, Mary's agent on the continent, a man deeply attached to her interests, and who had been long trained in the school of political intrigue. The rest were Francis Throckmorton, who suffered for it; Thomas, lord Paget; Charles Arundel, who fled to France; and some others. It is extremely difficult to discover what portion of the plot was real, and what fictitious; but that schemes were in agitation against Elizabeth, in which the Spanish ambassador, Mendoza, participated, and with which Mary was well acquainted, cannot be doubted. So clear did her servant Morgan's guilt appear to the King of France, in whose dominions he then resided, that although he refused to deliver him up as Elizabeth required, he threw him into prison, sent his papers to England, and treated him with much severity. Even in this durance, he managed to continue his secret practices; but Mary, who had now entered into negotiations with the queen for her liberty, renounced, for a season, all political intrigue; and the smouldering embers of the recent conspiracies were allowed to cool and burn out, whilst she looked forward with sanguine hope to her freedom. When, however, this hope was blasted; when she was removed from the gentler custody of the Earl of Shrewsbury to the severer jailership of Paulet;[1] when she was haunted by reports of private assassination, and at last saw Elizabeth and her son indissolubly leagued against her, she resumed her correspondence with Morgan, and welcomed every possible project for her escape.[2]

At this time Walsingham, the English queen's principal secretary, had brought the system of secret information to a state of high perfection, if we may use such an expression on the subject. The Queen of Scots, the French and Spanish ambassadors, the English Roman Catholic refugees, were surrounded by his creatures, who insinuated themselves into their confidence, pretended to join their plots, drew them on to reveal their secrets, and carried all their discoveries to their employers. Amongst these base tools of Walsingham, were Poley, a man who had found means to gain the ear and the confidence of Morgan, and been employed by him in his secret correspondence with the Catholics of England and France;[3] Gilbert Gifford, a seminary priest of a good family in Staffordshire, who was also intrusted by Morgan with his secrets; Maud, a sordid wretch, who pretended great zeal for the Catholic faith; and some others. He was also assisted by Thomas Phelipps, a person of extraordinary skill in detecting real, and concocting false plots, by forging imaginary letters, and of equal talent in discovering the key to the most difficult and complicated ciphers. In his service, too, was one Gregory, who, by

[1] In October 1584, Mary was removed from the castle of Sheffield to Wingfield; in January 1585-6, from Wingfield to Tutbury; in January 1586-7, from Tutbury to Chartley.

[2] Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 501.

[3] Murdin, p. 499, Morgan to Mary. Ult. Martii, 1586.

reiterated practice, had acquired the faculty of breaking and replacing seals with such nicety, that no eye could suspect the fracture.[1] By means of these agents, Walsingham, about the same time that the league had been concluded between Elizabeth and the King of Scots, discovered a conspiracy for the assassination of that princess. Of this atrocious design, Ballard, a seminary priest, and Savage, an English officer who had served in the Netherlands, were the principal movers; but Morgan, Mary's agent, undoubtedly encouraged the plot, and drew into it some of the English Catholic refugees. At the same time, the former great project for the invasion of England, the dethronement of Elizabeth, and the escape of Mary, was resumed by Spain, France, and the Scottish queen's Catholic friends in England and Scotland; and the captive princess herself became engaged in a secret correspondence on this subject with Morgan, Charles Paget, Sir Francis Englefield, and the French and Spanish ambassadors. Here, then, were two plots simultaneously carrying on; and amongst the actors to whom the execution was intrusted, some persons were common to both—that is, some were sworn to assist alike in the invasion and in the assassination; others knew only of the design against the government, and had no knowledge of the darker purpose against Elizabeth. Amongst these last, up to a certain date which can be fixed, we must undoubtedly class the Scottish queen. She was fully aware of, and indeed was an active agent in, the schemes which were in agitation for the invasion of the country and her own deliverance;[2] but she was ignorant at first of any designs against the life of her enemy.[3] Whether to the last she remained so ignorant of all, has been disputed; but in the meantime, the predicament in which she stood, as all must see, was one of extreme peril, and so the result proved. Walsingham, through his spies, became acquainted with both plots; and his fertile and unscrupulous mind, assisted and prompted by such an instrument as Phelipps, projected a scheme for involving Mary in a knowledge of both, and thus drawing her on to her ruin. Such being the general design, let us now look more minutely into the history and proceedings of the conspirators.

John Savage, a Roman Catholic gentleman, who had served in the wars of the Low Countries, becoming acquainted with some fanatical priests of the Jesuit seminary of Rheims, was induced, by their arguments, to believe that the assassination of the English queen would be a meritorious action in the sight of God. They argued that the Papal bull, by which this princess was excommunicated, was dictated by the Holy Spirit; and that to slay any person thus anathematised must be accounted an act of faith, and not of murder. Savage, thus worked upon, took a solemn vow that he would kill the queen; and prepared to return to England for the purpose.[4] Previous to his departure, however, John Ballard, a priest of the same seminary, and a busy agent of Morgan, returned to France, from a tour which he had made amongst the Catholics of England and Scotland. The purpose of his mission thither had been to organise the plot for the invasion of England; the object of his return was to confer upon the same subject with Mendoza the Spanish ambassador, Charles Paget, and the other English Catholic refugees. Ballard was accompanied by Maud, the person already mentioned as a spy of Walsingham, who had deceived Ballard and Morgan, by pretending a great zeal for the Catholic cause; and through this base person the English secretary became

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Original cipher and decipher, endorsed by Phelipps. Papers of Mary Queen of Scots, Pietro, April 24, 1586, and Gilbert Gifford's letter, deciphered by Curle. Pietro was one of the names by which Gilbert Gifford was designated.

[2] MS., State-paper Office, Morgan to Mary, a decipher in Phelipps's hand. Ult. Martii, 1586, printed in Murdin, p. 481.

[3] Murdin, p. 527, Morgan to Mary, July 4, 1586.

[4] Carte, vol. iii. p. 601; and MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 290, Savage's Confession.

acquainted with all their proceedings.[1] Paget being consulted, argued strongly that no invasion could succeed during the lifetime of Elizabeth; and Ballard, assuming the disguise of a soldier, and taking the name of Captain Fortescue, or Foscue, came back to England much about the same time as Savage, whose fell purpose Morgan had communicated to him.

Soon after his arrival, Ballard addressed himself to Anthony Babington, a young gentleman of large fortune, and ancient Catholic family, in Derbyshire, who had before this shewn great zeal and activity in the service of the Queen of Scots. This was known to Ballard; and he, therefore, confidently opened to him the great scheme for the invasion of England, explained the ardour with which it had been resumed by Morgan and the Scottish queen, and exhorted him to second their efforts by every means in his power. Babington, it is certain, had been long warmly devoted to Mary. He had formed, when he was in France, an intimate friendship with Morgan; had been introduced to Beaton the Bishop of Glasgow, her ambassador in that country; and had returned to England with letters from both these persons, which strongly recommended him to the Scottish queen. From this time, for the period of two years, he had continued to supply her with secret intelligence, and to receive and convey her letters to her friends.[2] Latterly, however, all intercourse had been broken off; whether for some private cause, or on account of the greater strictness of Mary's confinement, does not appear certain. This interruption of Mary's correspondence with Babington had, however, given distress to Morgan; and most unfortunately, as it happened for the Scottish queen, Morgan had written to her, in urgent terms, on the 9th of May 1586, advising her to renew her secret intercourse with Babington, and describing him as a gentleman on whose ability and high honour she might have the firmest reliance.[3]

On being sought out by Ballard, Babington evinced all his former eagerness for the service of the captive queen; but expressed strongly the same opinion as that already given by Charles Paget, that no invasion or rising in England could succeed as long as Elizabeth lived. Ballard then communicated to him Savage's purpose of assassination; adding, that the gentleman who had solemnly bound himself to despatch that princess was now in England. This revelation produced an immediate effect; and Babington expressed a decided opinion that the simultaneous execution of both plots held out the fairest prospect of success. It would be dangerous, however, he said, to intrust the assassination to only one hand: it might fail, and all would be lost. He suggested, therefore, an improvement, by which the murder should be committed by six gentlemen of his acquaintance, of whom Savage should be one; whilst he pointed out the best havens where foreign troops might be landed; summed up the probable native force with which they were likely to be joined; and demonstrated the surest plan for the escape of the Scottish queen.[4] With all this Ballard was highly pleased; and from the time when the first meeting with Babington took place,[5] he and Babington employed themselves in discovering, amongst their acquaintance, such men as they deemed likely to engage in this abominable design. Three were soon procured to join with Savage: their names were Abingdon, the son of the late cofferer of the queen's household; Barnwell, who was connected with a noble family in Ireland; and Charnock, a Catholic gentleman

[1] Carte, vol. iii. p. 601, Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 515. Murdin, p. 517, Charles Paget to Mary, May 29, 1586.

[2] Hardwicke's Papers, vol. i. p. 227.

[3] Murdin, p. 513, Morgan to the Queen of Scots, May 9, 1586, or old style, April 29. Mary and her secretaries always followed the Roman or new style; Walsingham, Burghley, and Phelipps, the old style.

[4] Murdin, p. 513, Morgan to the Queen of Scots, May 9, 1586, or old style, April 29. Also Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 515.

[5] This period or interval cannot be precisely fixed. It seems to have been between the 27th of May and the 25th June.

in Lancashire.[1] Some time after, the number of six was made up by the addition of Charles Tilney, one of the queen's band of gentlemen pensioners, and Chidiock Titchbourne. Other gentlemen of their acquaintance were engaged to assist in the project for the invasion, and the escape of Mary; but the darker purpose of assassination was not revealed to them.[2]

During all this time, Mary, on account of the strictness of her confinement under Sir Amias Paulet, had found it extremely difficult to continue her correspondence with her friends abroad; but she had never abandoned the project of the Spanish invasion: and on the 5th May, she addressed a letter to Charles Paget, giving minute directions regarding the likeliest method of succeeding in their common enterprise against Elizabeth. From this letter, which, though long, is highly interesting, some passages must be given. They develop the whole plot for the invasion of England, and exhibit a determination in her designs against Elizabeth, which, when known, (as they came to be by the interception of the letter,) could not fail to excite extreme resentment.

"With an infinite number of other letters in cipher, [so she addressed Paget,] I received five of yours, dated the 14th January, 16th of May, and last of July 1585, and the 4th of February 1586. But, for their late arrival here, and all at once, it hath not been possible for me to see them all deciphered. And I have been, since the departure from Wingfield,[3] so wholly without all intelligence of foreign affairs, as, not knowing the present state thereof, it is very difficile for me to establish any certain course for re-establishing the same on this side; and methinks I can see no other means to that end, except the King of Spain, now being pricked in his particular by the attempt made on Holland and the course of Drake, would take revenge against the Queen of England; whilst France, occupied as it is, cannot help her. Wherefore I desire that you should essay, either by the Lord Paget during his abode in Spain, or by the Spanish ambassador, to discover clearly if the said King of Spain hath intention to set on England."

Mary then proceeded to state, with great force, the reasons which ought to move the Spanish king to adopt this course; after which, she thus expressed her hopes of giving him effectual assistance:—

"Now, in case that he deliberate to set on the Queen of England, esteeming it most necessary that he assure himself also of Scotland, either to serve with him in the said enterprise, or, at the least, to hold that country so bridled that it serve not his enemy; I have thought good that you enter with the ambassador of Spain, in these overtures following; to wit, that I shall travel by all means to make my son enter in the said enterprise; and if he cannot be persuaded thereunto, that I shall dress a secret strait league among the principal Catholic lords of that country, and their adherents, to be joined with the King of Spain, and to execute, at his devotion, what of their parts shall be thought meet for advancing of the said enterprise; so being they may have such succours of men and money as they will ask; which, I am sure, shall not be very chargeable, having men enough within the country, and little money stretching far and doing much there. Moreover," continued Mary, "I shall dress the means to make my son be delivered in the hands of the said King of Spain, or in the Pope's, as best by them shall be thought good; but with paction and promise to set him at liberty, whensoever I shall so desire, or that after my death, being Catholic, he shall desire again to repair to this isle. . . . This is the best hostage that I and the said lords of Scotland can give to the King of Spain for performance of that which may depend on them in the said enterprise. But withal must there be a regent established in Scotland, that [may] have commission and

1 Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 516.

2 MS., State-paper Office, decipher by Phelipps, Mary to Mendoza, May 20, 1586.

3 Mary was removed to Wingfield in October 1584.

power of me and my son, (whom it shall be easy to make pass the same, he being once in the hands of the said lords,) to govern the country in his absence; for which office I find none so fit as the Lord Claud Hamilton, as well for the rank of his house, as for his manhood and wisdom; and to shun all jealousy of the rest, and to strengthen him the more, he must have a council appointed him of the principal lords, without whom he shall be bound not to ordain anything of importance. I should think myself most obliged to the King of Spain, that it would please him to receive my son, to make him be instructed and reduced to the Catholic religion, which is the thing in the world I most desire; affecting a great deal rather the salvation of his soul than to see him monarch of all Europe; and I fear much, that so long as he shall remain where he is, (amongst those that found all his greatness upon the maintenance of the religion which he professeth,) it shall never be in my power to bring him in again to the right way; whereby there shall remain in my heart a thousand regrets and apprehensions, if I should die, to leave behind me a tyrant and persecutor of the Catholic Church.

"If you see and perceive the said ambassador to have *goust* in these overtures, and put you in hope of a good answer thereunto, which you shall insist to have with all diligence, I would then, in the meantime, you should write to the Lord Claud, letting him understand how that the King of Spain is to set on this country, and desireth to have the assistance of the Catholics of Scotland, for to stop, at least, that from thence the Queen of England have no succours; and to that effect, you shall pray the said Lord Claud to sound and grope the minds hereunto of the principal of the Catholic nobility in Scotland. . . . And to the end they may be the more encouraged herein, you may write plainly to the Lord Claud, that you have charge of me to treat with him of this matter. But by your first letter, I am not of opinion that you discover yourself further to him, nor to other at all, until you have received answer of the King of Spain, which being conform to this designment, then may you open more to the Lord Claud; shewing him, that to assure himself of my son, and to the end (if it be possible) that things be passed, and done under his name and authority, it shall be needful to seize his person, in case that willingly he cannot be brought to this enterprise; yea, and that the surest were to deliver him into the King of Spain's hands, or the Pope's, as shall be thought best; and that in his absence, he depute the Lord Claud his lieutenant-general and regent in the government of Scotland, which, you are assured, I may be easily persuaded to confirm and approve. For if it be possible, I will not, for divers respects, be named therein, until the extremity. . . . I can write nothing presently to the Lord Claud himself, for want of an alphabet between me and him, which now I send you herewith enclosed without any mark on the back, that you may send it unto him."[1]

Here, then, was Mary's plan, minutely detailed by herself; in which Spain was to "set on England," as she expressed it; Lord Claud Hamilton to be made regent in Scotland; her son, in the event of his refusal to turn Catholic, and combine against Elizabeth, to be seized, imprisoned, and coerced into obedience.

The vigour and ability with which the whole is laid down, needs no comment; and the Scottish queen omitted no opportunity to encourage her friends in that great enterprise which was now regarded as the forlorn hope for the recovery of her liberty, and the restoration of the Catholic faith in Britain.[2] All this time, however,

[1] MS., State-paper Office, decipher by Phelipps, Queen of Scots to Charles Paget, May 20, 1586, Chartley.

[2] MS., State-paper Office, Mendoza to the Queen of Scots, May 19, 1586, decipher by Phelipps. Ibid., decipher by Phelipps, Sir Francis Englefield to Nau, May 3, 1586. Ibid., Archbishop of Glasgow to Mary, decipher, May 20, 1586. See *supra*, p. 109, Randolph's intimation of this conspiracy to Walsingham.

Mary had no communication with Ballard. He had been specially warned not to attempt to hold any intercourse with the queen; and she had been informed by Morgan, in a letter written from his prison, that such an agent was in England labouring busily in her behalf, but that there were strong reasons why she should avoid, for the present, all communication with him. "He followeth," said he, "some matters of consequence, the issue whereof is uncertain; wherefore, as long as these labours of his and matters do continue, it is not for your majesty's service to hold any intelligence with him at all, lest he, or his partners, be discovered, and they, by pains or other accidents, discover your majesty afterwards to have had intelligence with them, which I would not should fall out for any good in the world. And I have specially warned the said Ballard," he continued, "not to deal at any hand with your majesty, as long as he followeth the affairs that he and others have in hand, which tend to do good, which I pray God may come to pass; and so shall your majesty be relieved by the power of God."[1]

In a postscript of a letter of Morgan's to Curle, Mary's French secretary, written on the same day, which was intercepted and deciphered by Phelipps, an indirect allusion was made to these practices of Ballard against the life of Elizabeth. "I am not unoccupied," said he, "although I be in prison, to think of her majesty's state, and yours that endure with her, to your honours; and there be many means in hand to *remove the beast that troubleth all the world.*"[2]

But although Mary, thus warned, prudently abstained from any communication with Ballard, she continued in active correspondence with Morgan, Englefield, Mendoza, Paget, and Persons, on the subject of "the great enterprise." The principal person through whom she transmitted her letters was Gilbert Gifford, who had sold himself to Walsingham. Her letters, accordingly, were regularly intercepted, deciphered by Phelipps, copied, considered by Walsingham, and then forwarded to their destination.[3] The English minister, therefore, was quite as well acquainted with the plot for the invasion of the realm, and the insurrection of the Roman Catholics, as the conspirators themselves. He knew, also, the desperate designs of Ballard, Babington, and his fellows, against the queen's life; yet, as Mary had abstained from all intercourse with the conspirators, there was no evidence to connect her with their designs. There might be presumptions against her; (and it seems to me impossible for any one to have read Morgan's allusion to the secret designs of Ballard without having a suspicion of some dark purpose;) but nothing had yet brought her into direct contact with Ballard or Babington. Here, then, was the difficulty; and as Walsingham pondered over the way to remove it, it seems to have fallen out, most unhappily for the Scottish queen, that in consequence of the advice of Morgan, she resolved to renew her correspondence with Babington, who probably about this time had returned from France to England, bringing with him the letter of the 29th April above mentioned.[4] It has been imagined that Mary was drawn on to renew her correspondence with Babington by a stratagem of Walsingham's; but although Walsingham was busy and ingenious in his stratagems after the correspondence had begun, there is no proof that any measures of his led to its renewal; and it is evident, from what has been already stated, that for this purpose no trick or stratagem was required.

But, however this may be, Mary could not have adopted a more fatal step; indeed, it was the very crisis of her fate. Hitherto, she knew only of the project for the Spanish invasion; and, listening to the suggestions of prudence and

[1] Morgan to the Queen of Scots, Murdin, p. 527.

[2] MS., State-paper Office, Morgan to Curle, decipher by Phelipps, 24th June, old style, 4th July, new.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Paulet to Walsingham, April 11, 1586.

[4] *Supra*, p. 116.

suspicion, had connected herself in no way with Ballard and the plot against Elizabeth's life. Had she continued thus cautious, she was ignorant, and she was safe. But Babington arrived in England; his residence lay in the near neighbourhood of Mary's prison; Morgan had given him a letter to that princess, recommending the renewal of their intercourse. The person who then managed the secret conveyance of Mary's letters was the treacherous Gifford. He, we know, would first convey it to Walsingham to be deciphered; it would be then forwarded to the Scottish queen. What a moment of suspense must this have been for the English secretary, who was watching, in silence and concealment, for the evidence which might convict the captive queen! Had she suspected, or hesitated, or delayed, Morgan, who was in communication with Ballard, and likely to be soon informed of Babington having joined the plot against Elizabeth's life, might have warned her against having any communication with him, as he had done against corresponding with Ballard. But Mary, if we are to believe the letters produced on her trial, which, however, she affirmed to be forgeries, had no suspicion. She wrote to Babington, at first briefly: he, if we are to accept as genuine a copy of his letter produced at the trial, replied at great length. In his reply, the scheme for the invasion was connected with the conspiracy for the assassination of the queen. Mary again answered; at least so it was alleged by her enemies, who produced a copy of her reply. She there gave directions for the landing of the troops and her own escape; she alluded also to the assassination; and in her letter, if genuine, certainly did not deprecate it. The agent who managed this secret correspondence was Gifford; the man in whom Babington chiefly confided was Poley. Both were sold to Walsingham: every letter was thus carried first to him, deciphered by Phelipps, copied, and reserved for evidence; every conversation between the conspirators was reported. At last, when all seemed ripe for execution, the signal was given; Gifford and his base assistants dropped the mask; Walsingham stepped from behind the curtain; Ballard and Babington were seized; and the unfortunate captive, one moment elated with hope, and joyous in the anticipation of freedom, found herself, in the next, detected, entangled, lost. This rapid summary has been given, to bring at one glance, under the reader's eye, the great lines in this miserable and intricate story; and before proceeding to trace it further, one observation must be added. From the system adopted by Walsingham, and the assistance he might derive from the unscrupulous ingenuity of Phelipps, it is clear that, if he were so base as to avail himself of it, he was in possession of a machinery by which he could make Mary appear guilty of any plot he pleased. The letters of her correspondents, Morgan, Babington, Paget, and others, were written in cipher to her, and her replies were conveyed in cipher to them. Both fell into the hands of the English secretary; and, at the subsequent trial of Mary, the two long letters which proved, as was contended, the queen's accession to the plot against Elizabeth's life, were produced,—not in the originals, but in alleged copies of the deciphered documents. Nothing can be more evident than that, under such a system, Mary may have been wholly innocent, and yet may have been made to appear guilty. The real letters which passed between her and Babington, and which were never produced, may have related solely to the great project for the invasion of England, and her escape. The copies of these letters, avowedly taken by Phelipps, Walsingham's servant, may have been so manufactured as to connect the invasion with the assassination of Elizabeth. We shall afterwards see that Mary asserted this was really done: but, meanwhile, let us proceed with the story.

Mary had two secretaries, named Nau and Curle: the first a man of ability, intelligence, and education, but quarrelsome, and fond of political

intrigue; the second, chiefly employed as a clerk and decipherer: both of them enjoying her confidence, and intrusted with the management of her secret correspondence. It does not exactly appear when the Scottish queen received, through Babington, Morgan's letter, recommending the renewal of her correspondence with this gentleman; but, on the 4th July 1586,[1] Curle sent to Gifford, or to the substitute who sometimes acted for him, a packet, in which he enclosed a letter, which he begged him to convey to Anthony Babington. The letter accompanying this packet was in cipher, and in the following words:—

"On Sunday last I wrote unto you by this bearer, having received nothing from you since your letter, dated the 16th of this instant.[2] I hope to have her majesty's despatch, mentioned in my foresaid, ready for to-morrow sevennight, [conform to] the appointment. In the mean season, her majesty prayeth you to send your footboy, so closely as you can, with these two little bills: the one so ☞ marked, to Master Anthony Babington, dwelling most in Derbyshire, at a house of his own, within two miles of Winkfield;[3] as I doubt not but you know, for that in this shire he hath both friends and kinsmen; and the other bill, without any mark, unto one Richard Hurt Mercer, dwelling in Nottinghame Tower. Unto neither of the two foresaid personages your said boy needeth not to declare whose he is, (unless he be already known by them with whom he shall have to do;) but only ask answer, and what is given him, to bring it to your hands; which her majesty assureth herself you will, with convenient diligence, make come unto her. Her majesty desireth that you would, on every occasion you have to write hither, participate unto her such occurrences as come to your knowledge, either foreign or within the realm; and, in particular, what you understand of the Earl of Shrewsbury his going to court. God preserve you. Chartley, of July the 4th, on Saturday."[4]

This letter, the authenticity of which there is no reason to dispute, is a small slip of paper written wholly in cipher; the decipher being added below it by Phelipps, but much mutilated. It will not, however, escape an attentive reader, that the writer does not specify by whom the enclosed letter to Anthony Babington was written. It may have been from Mary, or it may possibly have been from her secretary Nau, or from Curle. Walsingham and Burghley, indeed, afterwards alleged at the trial, and it was so pleaded, that the enclosure was a letter from the Queen of Scots to Babington; and this enclosed letter is certainly alluded to as extant in a list drawn up by Burghley; but if it ever existed, it is now lost. It was not brought forward at the trial, when Mary demanded to see it, and alleged that no such letter was ever written by her: a *copy* was all that was then produced; and a copy of the decipher is all that we now have.[5] This letter,

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Curle to *ff*, [Gifford,] July 4, Saturday.

[2] By this is meant the 16th of June.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Curle to *ff*, [Gifford,] July 4, Saturday.

[4] This letter is preserved in cipher in the State-paper Office, in a most valuable collection of original papers and letters, entitled, "Papers of Mary queen of Scots." The deciphered part, in Phelipps's hand, is, much of it, illegible. It is now printed, for the first time, from a decipher, by Mr Lemon of the State-paper Office. It is singular, as that gentleman has remarked, that Curle, or Nau, in writing it, made an error in the date. In 1586, the 4th of July, Roman style, which Mary's secretaries used, was on a Friday, not a Saturday; Saturday was the 5th of July, but the writer had mistaken the day of the month. This trivial circumstance appears to me to confirm the authenticity of the letters; and there is another instance of carelessness in it; he speaks, although writing on the 5th July, of the 16th "of this instant;" evidently meaning the 16th June. This tells the same way.

[5] It may be added, that there is also in the State-paper Office, a copy of the same letter in cipher, made by some unknown hand, most probably Gifford's, on the back of the small ciphered letter already quoted, of date the 4th July, enclosing to Gifford the queen's letter to Babington. It may be conjectured that Gifford, before forwarding the original to Babington, took a copy of it on the back of his own letter. This letter was deciphered for me by Mr Lemon, and is exactly the same as that printed in the text, with the excep-

purporting to be addressed by Mary to Babington, was as follows :—

"My very good friend, albeit it be long since you heard from me, no more than I have done from you, against my will; yet would I not you should think I have the meanwhile, or ever will be, unmindful of the effectual affection you have shewed heretofore towards all that concerneth me. I have understood, that upon the ceasing of our intelligence, there were addressed unto you, both from France and Scotland, some packets for me. I pray you, if any be come to your hands, and be yet in place, to deliver them to the bearer hereof, who will make them to be safely conveyed unto me. And I will pray God for your preservation. At Chartley, your assured good friend, MARIE R."[1]

When the packet containing this letter reached Gifford, it was immediately conveyed to Sir Amias Paulet, who transmitted it to Walsingham on the 29th June, with many regrets that it appeared to him too small to contain any very important matter. He, at the same time, informed the English secretary, that Phelipps, who was then in London, and to whom Elizabeth and Walsingham appear to have committed the management of the whole plot for the interception of Mary's letters, had written a letter to him, in which he laid down a new plan of operations, by which he hoped to succeed more surely and speedily. Paulet, however, rejected it as dangerous, and liable, by exciting suspicion, to break off the good course already begun.[2] He added, that this was the more to be feared, as it was expected that, on the 3d of the month, "great matter" would come from these people. Three days after this letter of Paulet's of the 29th June,[3] Mary wrote from Chartley to Morgan, informing him that Pietro, the name given to Gifford in their letters, at his last return from France, had brought her three letters from him, one of which regarded Babington. She stated, also, that she had received an anonymous letter, which, she imagined, came from Poley, who made courteous offers; but she was afraid to deal in it till she had ascertained the matter more certainly; advising Morgan, for the greater security, to keep those persons with whom she had to deal as much as possible unknown to each other. She then added this remarkable passage regarding her intercourse with Babington :—"As to Babington, he hath both kindly and honestly offered himself and all his means, to be employed any way I would; whereupon I hope to have satisfied him by two of my several letters since I had his. He hath seen that mine hath prevented him with all lawful excuses shewn on my part of the long silence between us." In the conclusion of the same letter, the Scottish queen, in answer to the passage regarding Ballard, already quoted from Morgan's letter of the 4th July,[4] thus spoke of him :—"I have heard of that Ballard of whom you write, but nothing from himself, and, therefore, have no intelligence with him."[5]

tion, that the date is thus given in the ciphered letter: "Of June the 25th, at Chartley, by your assured good friend, MARIE R." The long interval between June 25 and July 5, can only be accounted for by supposing that Mary, in writing to Babington, contrary to her usual practice, used the old style; whilst Curle, or Nau, in writing to Gifford, and enclosing the queen's letter, used the new. The 25th June, old style, was exactly the 5th July, new, as there should be a difference of ten days.

[1] MS. Copy, State-paper Office, Mary to Babington, June 25.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Paulet to Walsingham, June 29, 1586. In this letter of Paulet's, which is too long to quote, we obtain a clear view of the machinery and the actors in this secret correspondence. Mary employed a brewer, who supplied the castle, and went by the name of "the honest man," to receive her letters from Gifford. He carried the answers to Gifford again, or to a cousin of his, who acted as his substitute; and all the three were in the pay of Walsingham and Paulet; so that the letters of the queen, or her secretaries, were sure to be intercepted, sent to Walsingham, deciphered by Phelipps, and then retransmitted to Paulet, who forwarded them to their destination.

[3] On the 12th July, new style, or 2d July old.

[4] *Supra*, p. 119.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, original decipher by Phelipps, Mary to Morgan, 12th July, new style, *i.e.*, 2d July, old.

On the day after, 13th July, Nau, Mary's secretary, wrote to Babington, informing him that his mistress had received his letters "yesternight," that is, on the evening of the 12th July;[1] which letters, he added, before this bearer's return, cannot be deciphered. He then continued:—"He (the bearer) is, within three days to repair hither again, against which time her majesty's letter will be in readiness. In the meantime, I would not omit to shew you, that there is great assurance made of Mr Poley's faithful serving of her majesty; and by his own letters [he] hath vowed and promised the same." But he subjoined this caution. "As yet, her majesty's experience of him is not so great as I dare embolden you to trust him much; he never having written to her majesty but once, whereunto she hath not yet answered. . . . Let me know plainly what you understand of him.—Twelfth July, Chartley.—NAU."[2]

Although these two letters, the first from Mary to Morgan, the second from Nau to Babington, appear not in the original, but only in the decipher, which is in the handwriting of Phelipps, and must therefore be regarded with suspicion, there seems no sufficient reason for doubting their authenticity; and they establish the fact, that the Scottish queen, at this time, had twice written to Babington, and meant to write again. They prove, also, that, on the 12th July, she had received letters from Babington. But with regard to the subject of his offers to her, or her reply to him, upon which depends the whole question of her guilt, all is still dark.

To understand what occurred next, the reader must keep in mind that, in his secret communications with Mary, Babington sometimes remained at Lichfield in the neighbourhood of Chartley, and sometimes went to London, for the purpose of holding his private meetings with the conspirators, and also of visiting Secretary Walsingham, to whom, strange as it may appear, he had offered himself as a spy upon the practices of the Roman Catholic party. His object in this was evident. He believed that Walsingham knew nothing of his designs; and hoped, under this disguise, to become acquainted with all the secret purposes of the secretary. But Walsingham was too old a diplomatist to be thus taken in; he accepted his offers, and made his own use of them. Hitherto Babington seems to have been in London, when he received, through Gifford or his substitutes, the letters from Mary; but he now proposed to come down to Lichfield, and communicate with her secret messenger in person. It is evident that this change made some alteration necessary on the part of Walsingham and Phelipps; for the delay which must have occurred in having the intercepted letters sent up to London, deciphered, copied, and retransmitted to be delivered again to Babington, would have raised suspicion, and must, in all probability, have led to discovery. Phelipps, therefore, was sent down to Chartley,[3] where, on pretence of some other business, he took up his residence with Sir Amias Paulet; and thus no time was lost in deciphering the intercepted letters, and no suspicion raised. In this way Walsingham trusted that he would be enabled, following out what they had begun, to draw the nets more tightly round the Scottish queen, and procure, at last, a clear and positive ground of conviction. Keeping this in view, the correspondence grows more and more interesting.

Phelipps left London for Chartley on the evening of the 7th July,[4] and on the way thither he met a messenger with a packet from Sir Amias Paulet to Walsingham, which, accord-

[1] July 12, new style; July 2, old.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, original decipher by Phelipps, endorsed, Nau to Babington, July 13.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Phelipps to Walsingham, Chartley, July 14, 1586. Also ibid., Phelipps to Walsingham, Stilton, July 8.

[4] It is stated by Dr Lingard, that he brought with him Babington's long letter to Mary, and it seems very probable that he did so; but I have found no authority for this, and none is given for it.

ing to the directions he had received from this minister, he opened. It contained a letter of Mary's to the French ambassador. This the decipherer carried back with him to Chartley, determining to copy it with all speed, and send it up again; adding in his letter, that he knew the ambassador was expecting it earnestly. "By Sir Amias's letter," (to quote his note to Walsingham,) "I find" (said he) "all things to stand in so good terms, as my abode here will be the less, but for Babington's matters, which I beseech you resolve thoroughly and speedily."[1]

The arrival of Phelipps at Chartley was not unnoted by the Scottish queen, whose mind, with the acuteness and suspicion produced by a long captivity, eagerly scrutinised every new person or circumstance which might affect her destiny. She remembered that Morgan had employed many years ago a gentleman of the same name; but she had never seen him. Could this be the same, and was he to be trusted, or might he not be some new spy or eavesdropper of her enemies? To ascertain this, she sent a minute description of his person to Morgan.[2] He must have arrived at Chartley on the 9th July; and having deciphered the intercepted packet to the French ambassador, he, on the 14th, transmitted it with this letter to Walsingham:—

"It may please your honour, the packet is presently returned, which I stayed, in hopes to send both that and the answer to Ba.[3] letter at once; in the meanwhile beginning to decipher that which we had copied out before. And so I send your honour her letter to the French ambassador, which was in cipher, and her letters to the Lord Claud[4] and Courcelles out of cipher. Likewise, the short note was sent to Bab., wherein is somewhat only in answer of that concerned Poley in his. *We attend her very heart in the next.* She begins to recover health and strength, and did ride about in her coach yesterday. I had a smiling countenance, but I thought of the verse—

'Cum tibi dicit Ave—sicut ab hoste Cave.'

I hope by the next to send your honour better matters." . . . The postscript of this letter is important. "If the posts make any reasonable speed, these will be with you by to-morrow noon; and G. G." (he means Gilbert Gifford) "may have delivered his packet and received his answer by Sunday; which then despatched hither, would give great credit to the action; for otherwise we look not to depart this se'nnight, and, therefore, as good all that belonged hereto were done here as at London."[5]

How strange a scene was that now presented by the castle of Chartley, Mary's prison! The poor queen carrying on a plot for her escape; watching anxiously the fate of her letters, on which all depended, and believing all safe; whilst Phelipps, living then under the same roof, and meeting her, as he says, with a smiling countenance, was opening every packet; communicating her most secret thoughts to Walsingham and Elizabeth; and weaving, at her very elbow, the toils in which she was to be caught.

On this same day, the 14th July, Sir Amias Paulet wrote to Walsingham, acquainting him that the packet sent by Mr Phelipps had been thankfully received, with such answer given by writing as the shortness of the time would allow, and a promise made to answer more at length at the return of the honest man, which, he added, would be in three days. This packet, brought down by Phelipps, and thankfully received by Mary, appears to

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Phelipps to Walsingham, July 8, 1586.

[2] "He was," she said, "of low stature, slender every way, dark, yellow-haired on the head, and clear yellow-bearded, pitted in the face with small-pocks, short-sighted, and, as it appeared, about thirty years of age." We have here a minute portrait of an acute, unscrupulous, and degraded man; whose talents, as a spy and decipherer, were so successfully employed by Walsingham in the detection and destruction of the Scottish queen.

[3] Ba., for Babington.

[4] Lord Claud Hamilton.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, July 14, 1586, Phelipps to Walsingham, Chartley.

have contained a long letter from Babington. It described the conspiracy for the invasion of the realm, the escape of the Scottish queen, and the assassination of Elizabeth. This letter, which was not produced at the trial, and which Mary denied having ever received, no longer exists, if it ever did exist, in the original; but a copy, in a clerk's hand, has been preserved. Its purport was to excuse his long silence, every means of conveying his letters having been cut off since the time that she had been committed to the custody of such a Puritan as Paulet. He then gave an account of his conference with Ballard; informed her of the intended murder of the Queen of England by six gentlemen selected for that purpose, and of his resolution to set her at the same time at liberty; and he requested her to assign rewards to the actors in this tragedy, or to their posterity, should they perish in the attempt.[1]

It is to be remembered that this day, the 14th July, in Sir Amias's letter and Mr Phelipps's, was the 24th July according to the new style, which Mary and her secretaries, Curle and Nau, followed in their letters; and, accordingly, we find that Curle, on the 22d July, new, or 12th July, old style, and on the 27th July, new, or 17th, old, wrote two short letters in cipher, which were deciphered by Phelipps, then at Chartley. They were addressed to Gifford; and in the first he told him that the Queen of Scots had received his letter, dated the 12th of that instant, with its enclosure; that she was grateful for his diligence, but approved of his cousin Gilbert's advice, not to employ frequently a certain person to whom he had alluded. He (Curle) then added this sentence:—"If Mr Babington be past down to the country, for whom this character ȝȝ shall serve in time coming, her majesty prayeth you to cause convey to him this enclosed, otherwise to stay it until you hear from her majesty again. With my next I shall do my best to satisfy you touching the other characters. God have you in protection. Of July 22d. CURLE, Chartley."[2]

In the other letter of the 27th July, Curle wrote to the same person, or to Gilbert Gifford, much to the same purpose, informing him that Mary had received his letter of the 25th instant; that she commended his zeal, and begged him to have "this enclosed surely delivered in the hands of Anthony Babington, if he were come down in the country; otherwise to keep it still in his own hands, or his brother's, until Babington should arrive." He goes on to say that, within ten days, her majesty would have a packet ready to be sent to the French ambassador by his boy, who, by the same means, might also carry the other to Babington at London, if he was not come sooner.[3]

Here then, at last, is the anxiously expected packet from Mary to Babington, to which, as we have seen, Phelipps alluded in his letter of the 14th July, when he wrote to Walsingham, with such emphatic eagerness, "We attend her very heart in the next." It was enclosed in the packet with this letter of Curle's of the 27th July, and was instantly pounced upon by those who were watching for it. Accordingly, on the 19th July, which, it must be recollected, is the 29th July, new style, Phelipps wrote in exultation from Chartley to Walsingham:—"It may please your honour, you have now this queen's answer to Babington, which I received yesternight. If he be in the country, the original will be conveyed into his hands, and, like enough, answer returned. I hope for your honour's speedy resolution touching his apprehension or otherwise, that I may dispose of myself accordingly. I think, under correction, you have enough of him; unless you would discover more particularities of the confederates, which may be done even in his imprisonment. If your honour mean to take him, ample commission and charge would be given to

[1] Carte, vol. iii. p. 603. Lingard, vol. viii. p. 205.

[2] MS., State-paper Office, cipher and decipher, July 22, Curle.

[3] Ibid., July 27, 1586.

choice persons for search of his house. It is like enough, for all her commandment, her letter will not be so soon defaced. I wish it for an evidence against her, if it please God, to inspire her majesty with the heroical courage that were meet for the avenge of God's cause, and the security of herself and this state: at least I hope she will hang Nau and Curle, who justly make Sir Amias Paulet take upon him the name she imputes to him—of a jailer of criminals. . . . I have sent you herewith of this queen's letters in the packet was last sent, those to the Bishop of Glasgow, Don Lewis, and Morgan. . . . She is very bold to make way to the great personage; and I fear he will be too forward in satisfying her for her change till he see Babington's treasons, which I doubt not but your honour hath care enough of not to discover which way this wind comes in. I am sorry to hear from London that Babington was not yet taken, and that some searches, by forewarning, have been frustrated."[1]

Phelipps concluded his letter, by cautioning Walsingham against one Thoroughgood, who had applied for a licence to leave the country, and whom he suspected might be Ballard under a feigned name; and added this postscript:—"It may please your honour, by Berdon, or my man, to inform yourself whether Babington be at London or no; which known, we will resolve presently upon return." Paulet also wrote briefly, but joyfully, to Walsingham. His words, he said, would be few; the papers now sent containing matter enough for one time; but he rejoiced that "God had blessed his labours, giving him the reward of true and faithful service; and trusted that the queen, and her grave councillors, would make their profit of the merciful providence of God towards her highness and England."[2]

It must here be remarked that there seems no good reason to doubt the perfect authenticity of those two notes of Curle's, of the 22d and 27th July; and, therefore, no ground for questioning the fact that the Queen of Scots had transmitted two several letters to Babington: neither can there be any doubt that the letters of Phelipps, written on his road to Chartley, and during his residence there, are authentic; for they, like Curle's notes, are preserved, and prove themselves. But it is certainly remarkable, and cannot but excite suspicion, that, at this critical moment, the originals of Mary's two letters to Babington, which Phelipps undoubtedly received, and the contents of which proved, as was affirmed, Mary's knowledge of the plot against Elizabeth's life, have both disappeared. Nay, the singularity goes further; for Mary sends two letters to Babington, one on the 25th, the other on the 27th; and only one was afterwards produced against her, and that confessedly not an original. All the other letters of Curle, Morgan, Nau, Gifford, and others, in these intricate doings, have been preserved, and generally with the decipher; but this letter, the most important of all, on which, indeed, the whole question turned, is a copy. At the trial, when this copy was produced and argued on, when Mary solemnly asserted that it was never written by her, and challenged her enemies to shew the original, it was not forthcoming. It is impossible not to regard this as a suspicious circumstance, coupled with the fact already noticed, that the letter of Babington to Mary is in the same predicament, and exists only as a copy; and this suspicion is greatly increased by an assertion of Camden, that, after intercepting and opening the Scottish queen's letter to Babington, Walsingham and his assistant Phelipps cunningly added to it a postscript in the same characters, desiring him to set down the names of the six gentlemen; and it is likely (he observes) other things too.[3] Hitherto this statement of Camden, which involves a charge of so dark a kind against Walsingham, has rested on his

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Phelipps to Walsingham, July 19, 1586.

[2] Ibid., Paulet to Walsingham, July 20, 1586.

[3] Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 517.

bare averment, unsupported by all evidence; but I have found recently, in the State-paper Office, a small letter, written wholly in the same cipher as that of Mary's long letter to Babington, and endorsed, in the hand of Phelipps, "The postscript of the Scottish queen's letter to Babington." It runs thus, and certainly gives great support to the allegation of Camden:—"I would be glad to know the names and qualities of the six gentlemen which are to accomplish the designment; for that it may be I shall be able, upon knowledge of the parties, to give you some further advice necessary to be followed therein;[1] as also, from time to time, particularly how you proceed; and as soon as you may, for the same purpose, who be already, and how far every one, privy hereunto."[2] The exact bearing of this postscript, as a proof of Mary's innocence, will afterwards appear. In the meantime, it is sufficient to remark, that it goes far to establish the fact, that her letters to Babington were tampered with and added to by Walsingham.

Returning, however, to the contents of her reply, we find that Mary, in this real or pretended letter to Babington, entered fully into the details of the intended invasion. She recommended them to examine deeply, first what forces they might raise; what captains they should appoint; of what towns and havens they could assure themselves; where it would be best to assemble their chief strength; what number of foreign auxiliaries they required; what provision of money and armour; by what means the six gentlemen deliberated to proceed; and in what manner she should be assisted in making her escape. Having weighed all this, she recommended them to communicate the result, and their intentions, to Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador, to whom she promised to write: she enjoined on them the greatest caution and secrecy; and, to conceal their real designs, advised them to communicate it only to a few, pretending to the rest of their friends that they were arming themselves against some suspected attack of the Puritans. She then expressed herself in these remarkable words:—

"Affairs being thus prepared, and forces in readiness, both without and within the realm, then shall it be time to set the six gentlemen to work; taking order, upon the accomplishing of their design, I may be suddenly transported out of this place, and that all your forces, in the same time, be on the field to meet me. . . . Nor for that there can be no certain day appointed of the accomplishing of the said gentlemen's designment, to the end that others may be in readiness to take me from hence, I would that the said gentlemen had always about them, or, at the least, at court, four stout men furnished with good and speedy horses, for, as soon as the said design shall be executed, to come with all diligence, to advertise thereof those that shall be appointed for my transporting; to the end that, immediately thereafter, they may be at the place of my abode, before that my keeper can have advice of the execution of the said design, or at least before he can fortify himself within the house, or carry me out of the same. It were necessary to despatch two or three of the said advertisers by divers ways, to the end that if one be staid, the other may come through; and at the same instant, were it also needful, to assay to cut off the post's ordinary ways. This is the plat which I find best for this enterprise, and the order whereby you should conduct the same for our common securities. . . . I shall assay," she continued, "that at the same time that the work shall be

[1] After this, in the original cipher, follows this sentence scored through, but so as to be quite legible:—"And even so do I wish to be made acquainted with the names of all such principal persons, as also wo be already as also who be."

[2] This was deciphered for me by Mr Lemon of the State-paper Office, who has added this sentence:—"I hereby declare, that the above is a true and literal decipher of the document in the State-paper Office in cipher, endorsed by Phelipps, *The Postscript of the Scottish Queen's letter to Babington.* The lines struck through with the pen are in a similar manner struck through in the original. ROBT. LEMON." The spelling has been modernised.

in hand in these parts, to make the Catholics of Scotland arise, and to put my son in their hands; to the effect that from thence our enemies here may not prevail to have any succour." She then added this caution, little believing that, in the moment she was writing, her cause had been betrayed, "Take heed of spies and false brethren that are amongst you, specially of some priests already practised by our enemies for your discovery; and in any wise keep never any paper about you that in any sort may do harm; for from like errors have come the condemnation of all such as have suffered heretofore." . . . In the last place, the queen informed Babington that, for a long time past, she had been a suitor to have the place of her confinement changed, and that Dudley castle had been suggested, to which place it was not unlikely she might be removed by the end of summer. She then observed, "If I stay here, there is for that purpose [her escape] but one of these three means following to be looked [to.] The first, that at one certain day, appointed, in my walking abroad on horseback on the moors, betwixt this and Stafford, where ordinarily you know very few people do pass, a fifty or threescore men, well horsed and armed, come to take me there, as they may easily, my keeper having with him ordinarily but eighteen or twenty horsemen, only with dags.[1] The second mean is, to come at midnight, or soon after, to set fire in the barns and stables, which you know are near to the house; and whilst that my guardian's servants shall run forth to the fire, your company (having every one a mark whereby they may know one another under night) might surprise the house, where, I hope, with the few servants I have about me, I were able to give you correspondence. And the third: some that bring carts hither, ordinarily coming early in the morning, their carts might be so prepared, and with such cart-leaders, that being cast in the midst of the great gate, the carts might fall down or overwhelm, and that thereupon you might come suddenly with your followers to make yourself master of the house and carry me away." She concluded her letter with expressions of deep gratitude to Babington: — "Whatsoever issue the matter taketh, I do and will think myself obliged, as long as I live, towards you for the offers you make to hazard yourself as you do for my delivery; and by any means that ever I may have, I shall do my endeavour to recognise, by effects, your deserts herein. I have commanded a more ample alphabet to be made for you, which herewith you will receive. God Almighty have you in protection! — Your most assured friend for ever. ☞ Fail not to burn this present quickly."[2]

As soon as Walsingham had procured this letter, which directly implicated Mary, not only in the conspiracy for the invasion, but proved, by inference, her assent to the plot for the assassination of the English queen, he determined to secure Ballard and his fellows on the first opportunity. It was necessary, however, to act with extreme caution. If one of the conspirators was laid hold of before another, the rest might take alarm and escape, the news reach Chartley, and Mary, whose papers he had resolved to seize, might order everything to be destroyed. He was too acute not to anticipate great difficulty even after all he had done and intercepted. The letters of Mary to Morgan and to Babington were not in the queen's hand, but in cipher, and were written by her secretaries, Nau or Curle. She might deny them. The small notes enclosing these letters were also in cipher, and confessedly from Curle and Nau. She might assert that they had written them without her orders, and unknown to her.[3] The only way of completing the proof was to search her repositories for the original minutes or rough drafts of these letters, and to seize Curle and

[1] "Dags"—Pistols.

[2] MS. Copy, State-paper Office.

[3] The reader will observe that I am here reasoning on the assumption that Mary's letters to Babington, as they appear in the copies, were authentic.

Nau, and compel them to confess all they knew. Hence the extreme danger of giving any alarm at Chartley, which might lead to the destruction of the one or the escape of the other. Babington apparently was still unsuspicious, and in constant communication with Walsingham. Contrary to his original intention, he had given up his plan of going down to Lichfield, and had remained in London, where he held secret meetings with Ballard, Savage, Poley, Dun, and the other conspirators.

In these difficult circumstances, Walsingham was compelled to act rapidly, and yet with caution. He sent for Phelipps, (July 22d,) who remained still at Chartley, busy in the task of deciphering the last letters intercepted, addressed to Mendoza and the French ambassador.[1] Elizabeth, he said, would thank him, on his arrival, with her own lips; but as Babington was still in London, he must bring with him the original letter of Mary to this traitor. It was not, however, brought up by the decipherer till the 27th or 28th, and was then conveyed to Babington by a secret messenger, to whom he promised to have the answer ready by the 2d of August.[2] And here, in passing, it seems very important to remark, that the original letter of Mary to Babington, the letter which brought home to her the knowledge of the conspiracy against the queen's life, and which has been already fully quoted, was confessedly in the hands of Phelipps the decipherer from the evening of the 18th July, when he intercepted it,[3] to the 27th or 28th of the same month, a period of nine days at the least. There was ample time, therefore, to make any changes or additions which might seem necessary for the implication of the Scottish queen. So far with Walsingham all had proceeded well. Babington had received the important letter, and promised his answer. Meanwhile, the task of arresting Ballard had been committed to Milles, one of Walsingham's secretaries; but this conspirator used so many devices, and glided about so mysteriously, often changing his lodging, that for some time he eluded all their vigilance. At last he was seized and lodged in the Counter, a prison in Wood Street.[4] Phelipps, however, began to be in great alarm about Babington, who had now become suspicious that they were discovered, and instead of keeping his appointment for the 2d August, had ridden out of town, none knew where. The truth seems to have been that the unhappy man was in an agony of suspense. He had discovered Maud's treachery, and trembled for their plot being on the point of detection. If he fled, the cause was lost. If he remained, it might be to perish miserably. He at last resolved to write to Mary, and returned with the vain hope of still over-reaching Walsingham. His letter to the Scottish queen, dated the 3d August, was intercepted like the rest.[5] It informed her of their danger, but conjured her not to be dismayed, for all would yet go well. It was God's cause, he said, and that of the Church: it must succeed; and they had sworn to perform it or die. He added, that he would send the answer to her propositions, and their final determination, in the next.[6] This promised letter, however, he was destined never to write. He returned to London on the 4th August, the day on which Ballard was apprehended; heard the fatal news; attempted a feeble remonstrance with Walsingham; was reassured by the crafty excuses of that veteran intriguer for a few hours; again doubted and trembled; and at last, eluding the men who were set to watch his motions, escaped, in disguise, with some of his companions, and concealed

1 MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Phelipps, July 22, 1586, Papers of Mary.

2 Ibid., Paulet to Walsingham, July 29, 1586, Papers of Mary.

3 Supra, p. 125.

4 MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Milles to Walsingham, August 4, 1586.

5 Ibid., Phelipps to Walsingham, August 2, 1586.

6 Ibid., copy, Babington to the Queen of Scots, August 3, 1586.

himself in St John's Wood, near the city.

Walsingham appears hitherto, in these plots and counterplots, to have acted on his own responsibility; but it had at length become necessary to determine on Mary's fate; and with this view, he now, for the first time, laid before Elizabeth, in their full extent, the appalling discoveries which he had made; the conspiracy for the invasion of the realm; and that also against her own life. The queen was thunderstruck. She saw her extreme danger. The plot was evidently proceeding in her own dominions, in Scotland, in Spain, perhaps in France; yet, though its general purpose was clear, its particular ramifications, especially in Scotland, and at Rome, were still unknown. She now recalled to mind Randolph's solemn and warning letter, written from Edinburgh some months before this.[1] The persons to whom he alluded must be fellow-conspirators of Ballard; and this man, who seemed the principal agent, could probably tell all. Walsingham had used the precaution of apprehending him, simply on the charge of being a seminary priest, and, as such, interdicted by law from entering England. Elizabeth, under these circumstances, commanded Walsingham to keep everything still to himself. It was not time yet, she said, to consult the council; she and he must act alone; and it was her advice that he should first bribe some of Ballard's confidants, if he knew of any such, and thus elicit his secrets. She suggested, also, that if any cipher used by the traitor in his correspondence had come to his hands, he might employ it to extract from him the particulars of the plot against her life. It is from Walsingham's answer to this proposition of the queen that the above particulars are drawn; and the letter itself is too interesting to be omitted. It is as follows:—

"It may please your most excellent majesty, I will, as duty bindeth me, most pointedly observe your majesty's commandment, especially in keeping to myself both the depth and the manner of the discovery of this great and weighty cause. The use of some apt instrument towards Ballard, if there could be such a one found as he could confidently trust, or we might stand assured would deal faithfully, nothing would work so good effect as such a course. The party that hath been used between us, seemeth not in any sound concert with him, though he was content for the serving of his turn to use him. Touching the use of a cipher, there is none between him and any other come to my hands, so as nothing can be wrought that way, as your majesty most politicly adviseth. Mr Vice-chamberlain[2] and I are humbly to crave your majesty's directions touching the placing of Ballard afore examination. He remaineth now under a most strait guard in one of the Counters; and for the avoiding of intelligence, there are two trusty[3] placed with him to attend on him. In case he shall not lay himself open by disclosing, then were it fit he were committed to the Tower, with two trusty men to attend on him, to the end he may be examined out of hand, and forced by torture to utter that which otherwise he will not disclose."[4]

We must now turn to Mary, who not only remained in utter ignorance of all that happened, but continued her secret correspondence with her foreign friends "greedily," as Paulet expressed it, when he intercepted the packet.[5] The time had now come to disclose the toils. On the 3d of August, Mr Waad, a privy-councillor, posted from London, met Paulet in the fields near Chartley, and held a secret consultation. Its result was soon seen. The Scottish queen was still fond of the chase. She had cheerfully boasted to Morgan, in one of her letters, that when her enemies were representing her as bedrid she was able to handle her cross-bow, and fol-

[1] Supra, p. 190.

[2] Sir C. Hatton.

[3] So in original.

[4] MS., State-paper Office, original drafts, Walsingham to Elizabeth, about 5th or 6th August 1586.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Paulet to Walsingham, July 30, 1586.

low a stag.[1] On the morning of the 8th August, her keeper, Paulet, invited her to hunt in the neighbouring park of Tixall, belonging to Sir Walter Ashton: she accepted, rode from Chartley, with a small suite, amongst whom were Nau and Curle her secretaries, and had not proceeded far, when Mr Thomas Gorges encountered them, and, riding up to the queen, informed her of the discovery of the conspiracy; adding, that he had received orders not to suffer her to return to Chartley, but to carry her to Tixall. At the same instant Nau and Curle were seized, kept separate from each other, and hurried away, under a strong guard, to London. Mary was completely taken by surprise. She broke into violent reproaches, and called upon her suite to defend their mistress from the traitors who dared to lay hands on her. But a moment's reflection convinced her they were far too weak for resistance; and she suffered Paulet to lead her to Tixall.[2] Here, by Elizabeth's orders, she was kept a close prisoner, secluded from her servants, refused the ministry of her private chaplain, served by strangers, deprived of the use of writing materials, and completely cut off from all intelligence. Whilst this scene of arrest was acting in the fields, Mr Waad had arrived at Chartley, where he broke open her repositories, seized her caskets, papers, letters, and ciphers; and was, soon after, joined by Paulet, who took possession of her money. All was then packed up and sealed, preparatory to being sent to Elizabeth, who now appears to have directed every step. This princess was overjoyed at the success which had attended the arrest of Mary: she wrote to Paulet, addressing him as the most faithful of her subjects; promised him a reward "*non omnibus datum;*" and soon after sent a new message, eagerly desiring him to write the whole story of everything done to Mary; not that she suspected (as she said) he had omitted any part of his duty, but "simply that she might take pleasure in the reading thereof."[3] Above all things, Elizabeth urged the safe keeping, and immediate transmission to her, of the caskets found in the Queen of Scots' repositories. These, and the things contained in them, she declared were, in her esteem, of far greater value than Nau or Curle; and, not content with a written message, she deputed a special envoy from Windsor to look after these treasures and bring them at once.[4]

Shortly before this, Elizabeth had a new triumph in the seizure of Babington and his companions. Till now they had escaped the officers who were in pursuit; but, driven at last by hunger from the woods into the open country, they were apprehended near Harrow, and carried in triumph to London, amid the shouts and execration of the citizens. There was no want of evidence against them, and their own confessions corroborated all; but after the day for their trials had been fixed, and everything seemed ready, the English queen suddenly caught alarm, from the idea that if the charge made by the crown lawyers, and the evidence of the witnesses, deeply implicated Mary, her own life was not safe. Elizabeth had not yet resolved on the trial of the Scottish queen, and the evidence against her was most imperfect. Her two secretaries, Nau and Curle, had as yet confessed nothing which materially involved their mistress. No original minutes of the letters to Babington had been found.[5] Even if Mary's trial were to take place, it was clear that a considerable interval must

[1] The Queen of Scots to Morgan, July 27, 1586. Murdin, p. 534.

[2] MS., State-paper Office, Sir Amias Paulet's Postils to Mr William Waad's Memorial. Ibid., Esnevall to Courcelles, October 7, 1586.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr Necasius Yetswert to Sir Francis Walsingham, Windsor, August 19, 1586.

[4] Could it be that the queen expected to find, amongst these treasures, the famous casket, containing the letters of Bothwell, which she had made such strenuous exertions to get into her possession in 1583? Supra, vol. 54. Lingard, 4th edition, vol. viii. p. 212.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Phelipps, September 3, 1586.

elapse between her arraignment and the execution of the conspirators; and, in this interval, what might not be attempted against her own life? Though some of the leading conspirators were taken, yet many desperate men might still be lurking about court; and so intensely did she feel upon this subject, that, on the evening of the 12th September, the very day before the trial, she sent repeated messages and letters to Burghley, commanding that, in the "indictment," and in the evidence, there should be no enlargement of the Queen of Scots' crime. It was her favourite, Sir Christopher Hatton, the vice-chamberlain, who transmitted these wishes to Burghley; and the reason he gave was that Elizabeth felt that it might be perilous to herself, if anything were given in evidence which touched Mary "criminally for her life."[1]

Amid these alarms the trials proceeded; and Babington, Ballard, and Savage, with the rest of the conspirators, being found guilty, were executed on the 20th and 21st of September, with a studied cruelty, which it is revolting to find proceeded from Elizabeth's special orders.

She had at first suggested to her council that some "new device" should be adopted to enhance their tortures, and strike more terror into the people; to which it was answered by Burghley, that the manner of the execution prescribed by law would be fully as terrible as any other new device, if the hangman took care to "protract the action" to the extremity of their pains, and to the sight of the multitude who beheld it.[2] The executioner, by special direction, did so: but the sight of seven men cut up alive, after being partially strangled, was found to excite the rage and disgust of the multitude; and next day the second seven were permitted to be executed after a milder fashion.[3]

But, leaving these cruel scenes, we must turn to the unhappy Mary. On the 25th August, she was removed from Tixall to her former residence at Chartley, under the charge of Sir Amias Paulet, and a body of gentlemen of the neighbourhood, to the number of a hundred and forty horse. This strong escort Elizabeth thought necessary, from the suspicion that many commiserated Mary's fate; and, indeed, Walsingham's letters betrayed considerable uneasiness on the subject. But his apprehensions were needless, for nothing could now be more utterly helpless than the situation of the royal captive. She had been deprived, during her stay at Tixall, of all her servants, and was surrounded by strangers. When seen coming from the gate of the castle, a crowd of poor people assembled round her; and on some asking alms, she answered, weeping, that she had nothing to give. "All has been taken from me," said she: "I am a beggar as well as you." Then turning to Sir Walter Ashton, the proprietor of Tixall, and the other gentlemen, she again burst into tears, exclaiming, "Good gentlemen, I am not witting of anything intended against the queen." On reaching Chartley castle, her old prison, an affecting incident occurred. The wife of Curle, her secretary, had been confined during the interval between Mary's removal and her return; and before going to her own chamber, the queen, with the affectionate consideration which she always shewed to her servants, went to visit the mother and child. It was a female; and turning to Paulet, who stood by, she begged him, since her own priest was removed from her, to suffer his chaplain to christen the babe, and give it the name of Mary. It might have been imagined that Sir Amias, who constantly talked of Catholicism as idolatry, and believed Protestantism to be the truth, would have welcomed the proposal; but he peremptorily re-

[3] MS. Letter, Burghley to Sir Christopher Hatton, September 12, 1586, discovered by Mr Leigh, who is at present preparing a work on Babington's conspiracy.

[2] Lingard, 8vo edition, vol. viii. pp. 215, 216.

[3] Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 518.

fused. The queen said nothing at the time; but retiring for a short season, came again into the room, and taking the infant on her knee, dipped her hand in a basin of water, and sprinkling its face, said, "Mary, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Paulet, in a letter to Walsingham, which described the scene, affected to be shocked at a scandal which he might himself so easily have prevented. He was ignorant, probably, that the Catholic Church, under such circumstances, permitted lay baptism; but the man was of a perverse, churlish temper—a strict Puritan, and, as his letters often shewed, more remarkable for his zeal than his charity.[1] Mary now proceeded to her own apartment; and on reaching it, the keys of the chamber, and of her coffers, were offered to one of her servants, who had been at length suffered to attend on her: but the queen commanded him not to receive them, and bade Mr Darrel, one of Paulet's assistants, open the door. He did so; and on entering, finding her papers seized, and her repositories empty, she expressed herself with deep indignation; declaring that there were two things which the Queen of England could never take from her,—her English blood, and her Catholic religion. She then added, that some of them might yet be sorry for this outrage; a threat which ruffled and disturbed Paulet.[2]

All the efforts of Elizabeth and Walsingham were now directed to collect conclusive evidence against the Scottish queen. Her secretaries, Nau and Curle, were in their hands, and repeatedly examined; but, up to the 3d of September, their confessions did not materially involve their mistress.[3] The evidence connecting her with the general conspiracy for the invasion of the realm was perfectly clear; her correspondence with France, Spain, and Scotland, and her secret practices with the Catholics in England, were fully made out. But this was not considered enough; and Walsingham, in despair, wrote to Phelipps, then at Chartley, that Nau and Curle would by no means be brought to confess that they were acquainted with the letters that passed between their mistress and Babington; adding, "I would to God that these minutes could be found!"[4] It is evident that, by these minutes, the secretary meant such rough drafts, or notes, of Mary's letters to Babington, as he conjectured might be preserved in her repositories: and here we have a clear admission that, unless such were found, the evidence against the Scottish queen was considered incomplete. At this moment of perplexity and difficulty, Burghley wrote to Sir Christopher Hatton, suggesting that it was terror for themselves that kept the Scottish queen's secretaries silent: they refused, as he thought, to implicate their mistress, because it might bring ruin on themselves; "but," he added, "assure them of safety, and then we shall have the whole truth from them. Surely, then," said he, (to use his own revolting expressions,) "they will yield in writing somewhat to confirm their mistress's crime, if they were persuaded that themselves might scape, and the blow fall upon their mistress, betwixt her head and her shoulders."[5] So jocularly could the aged treasurer anticipate the scaffold and the block for the unhappy victim whom he was so solicitous to sacrifice. On the same day (4th September) Walsingham wrote to Phelipps, who was then at court. "It was evident," he said, "that Mary's minutes were not extant." He directed him, therefore, to seek access to Elizabeth, and persuade her to promise some extraordinary favour to Curle, who had admitted, in general terms, his mistress's correspondence

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Paulet to Walsingham, August 22, 1586. Ibid., same to the same, August 24, 1586. Ibid., same to the same, August 27, 1586.

[2] Ibid., same to same, August 27, 1586.

[3] Ibid., Walsingham to Phelipps, Sept. 3, 1586.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Phelipps, Sept. 3, 1586.

[5] MS. Letter, Burghley to Sir Christopher Hatton, Sept. 4, 1586; discovered by Mr Leigh. Lingard, vol. viii. p. 219.

with Babington, but obstinately refused to be more explicit.[1]

Both this person, Curle, and his brother-secretary, Nau, were, in truth, in a difficult dilemma. If they acknowledged that the correspondence between the queen and Babington was in their handwriting, whether the letters were in written characters or in cipher, or whether they related simply to the project of invasion, or included an allusion to the plot against Elizabeth's life, they stood convicted of treason. If they remained obstinate, they had before them the dreadful alternative of the Tower and the torture. They acted as might have been expected in such circumstances: at first denied everything, and at length made a partial admission, which increased the presumptions, but was not conclusive, against the Scottish queen. On the 5th September, the day after Burghley had written to Hatton, Nau, actuated no doubt by Hatton's promises of escape and pardon, described minutely the manner in which Mary managed her secret correspondence. The queen, he said, would never allow anything secret or important to be written anywhere but in her cabinet, himself and Curle sitting at the table. It was her usual practice to dictate the points which she was pleased should be written; he took them down, read them over to her, drew out the letters, again submitted them for correction, and finally delivered them to be put into cipher and disposed of according to her orders. In this manner were written the intercepted letters of the queen to the Archbishop of Glasgow, Charles Paget, and the Spanish ambassador; but as to the letter to Babington, he declared that his mistress had delivered it to him for the most part written in her own hand.[2] It was Curle, he said, who finally translated and put the letters in cipher; and this same process had taken place with this letter as with the rest. This evidence was far from being sufficiently explicit or satisfactory; and various attempts were made to amend it. Burghley now threatened Nau with the Tower;[3] and the terror of his commitment drew from him, on the 10th September, a long declaration, addressed privately to Elizabeth; which Burghley threw aside as of no importance, as it did not charge the Scottish queen with any direct accession to the conspiracy for Elizabeth's death, but simply with having previously known that such a plot existed.[4] The queen, Nau affirmed, had neither invented nor desired, nor in any way meddled with this plot, but had confined herself to the designs for the invasion of the realm and her escape; and at this crisis the unfortunate letter from Babington had arrived, which Mary had received, but did not consider herself bound to reveal. It is quite clear that this declaration, wrung out from Nau, did not corroborate, but rather contradicted, the alleged letter of the Scottish queen to Babington,—a sufficient reason why Burghley should have disregarded it. After an interval of eleven days, Nau and Curle were again examined before the Lord Chancellor, Burghley, and Sir Christopher Hatton. Babington and his companions had been executed the day before: on that same morning seven more conspirators had been drawn to Tyburn. In the interval between this examination and their last, Ballard had been so "racked" that he was carried to the bar and arraigned in a chair;[5] and it was hoped that, under the influence of terror for a similar fate, the secretaries would declare all. Of this last examination no perfect account has been preserved: but in an original minute drawn up by Phelipps, it is stated that Nau confessed that Curle had deci-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Phelipps, Sept. 4, 1586.

[2] MS., State-paper Office, September 5, 1586. Endorsed in Phelipps's hand, "6th September, Copie, Nau his confession of the manner of writing and making up his Mistress' pacquets; and that she wrote Babington's letters with her own hand."

[3] Letter, Burghley to Walsingham, Sept. 8, 1586; in Ellis, vol. iii. p. 5.

[4] MS., State-paper Office, September 10, 1586. Endorsed, "Nau's long declaration of things of no importance, sent privately to her Majesty."—This endorsation is wholly in Burghley's hand.

[5] MS., State-paper Office, Secret Advertisements, Babington, September 16, 1586.

phered Babington's letter to Mary: that he (Nau) afterwards took down, from her dictation, the points of her answer; in which his mistress required Babington to consider what forces they might raise, what towns they might assure, where were the fittest places to assemble, what foreign forces were required, what money they should demand, what were the means by which the six gentlemen deliberated to proceed, and in what manner she should be gotten out of the hold she was in.[1] Nau added that there was one other clause of his mistress's letter to Babington, in which she advised the six gentlemen to have about them four stout men with good horses, who, as soon as their purpose was executed, were to bring speedy intelligence to the party appointed to transport the Queen of Scots. This statement of Nau was corroborated by Curle; who added, that his mistress wished him to burn the English copy of the letters sent to Babington.[2]

It was now considered that there was sufficient evidence against the Queen of Scots, and there only remained the question of the mode of trial; nor was this long in deliberation. Elizabeth held a special consultation with Burghley on the 24th September;[3] and after considerable discussion and delay in the privy-council, a commission was issued on the 5th October to thirty-six individuals, including peers, privy councillors, and judges, directing them to inquire into and determine all offences committed against the statute of the 27th of the queen, either by Mary, daughter and heiress of James the Fifth, late King of Scotland, or by any other person whomsoever.[4] Chasteauneuf, the French ambassador, having heard of these proceedings, demanded, in the name of his master, that the Scottish queen should have counsel assigned her for her defence; but this was peremptorily refused: and on the 6th of October, Sir Amias Paulet, Sir Walter Mildmay, and Mr Barker, a notary, waited on Mary at Fotheringay castle, in Northamptonshire, to which place she had been removed from Chartley, and delivered her a letter from their mistress. It stated briefly and severely, that, to her great and inestimable grief, she understood that Mary pretended, with great protestations, to have given no assent to, and even to have been ignorant of, any attempt against her state and person. It asserted that the contrary would be verified by the clearest proofs; that she had, therefore, sent some of her chief and ancient noblemen to charge her with having consented to that most horrible and unnatural conspiracy lately discovered; that, living as she did within the protection of, and thereby subject to her laws, she must abide by the mode of trial which they enjoined; and she, therefore, required her to give credit to those noblemen who held her commission under the great seal, and make answer to whatever they objected against her.[5]

Mary read the English queen's letter with great composure. "I cannot but be sorry," said she, "that my sister is so ill informed against me, as to have treated every offer made by myself or my friends with neglect. I am her highness's nearest kinswoman, and have forewarned her of coming dangers; but have not been believed: and, latterly, 'the association' for her majesty's preservation, and the act passed upon it, have given me ample warning of all that is intended against me. It was easy to be foreseen that every danger which might arise to my sister from foreign princes, or private persons, or for matter of religion, would be laid to my charge. I know I have many enemies about the queen. Witness my long captivity, the studied indignities I have received, and now this last association between my sister and my son, in which I was not consulted, and which has been concluded without my consent. As to my answer to the accusa-

[1] MS., State-paper Office, September 21, 1586.

[2] Hardwicke Papers, vol. i. p. 237.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Burghley to Phelipps, September 24; 1586.

[4] Lingard, vol. viii. p. 222.

[5] MS. draft, State-paper Office, October 5, 1586.

tion now made," continued Mary, "her majesty's letter is indeed written after a strange sort. It seems to me to partake of the nature of a command; and it is, perhaps, expected that I am to reply as a subject. What!" she then exclaimed, catching fire at the word, whilst her eye flashed, and the colour for a brief space rose in her cheek, "does not your mistress know that I was born a queen? and thinks she that I will so far prejudice my rank and state, the blood whereof I am descended, the son who is to follow me, and the foreign kings and princes whose rights would be wounded through me, as to come and answer to such a letter as that? Never! Worn down as I may appear, my heart is great, and will not yield to any affliction. But why discuss these matters? Her majesty knows the protestation I have once before made to the Lord Chancellor and Lord de la Ware; and by that I still abide. I am ignorant of the laws and statutes of this realm; I am destitute of counsel; I know not who can be my competent peers; my papers have been taken from me; and nobody dareth, or will speak in my behalf, though I am innocent. I have not procured or encouraged any hurt against your mistress. Let her convict me by my words, or by my writings. Sure I am, neither the one nor the other can be produced against me: albeit, I am free to confess that, when my sister had rejected every offer which I made, I remitted myself, and my cause, to foreign princes."[1] A few days after this spirited and dignified answer was reported to Elizabeth, the thirty-six commissioners arrived at Fotheringay, and chose a deputation from their number to wait upon the queen; who, after four successive interviews with them, adhered to her resolution, and declined their jurisdiction. Into the clear and convincing reasons which she alleged for this proceeding it is unnecessary to enter, although it is impossible not to be struck with the spirit, ability, and talent with which, unbefriended and unassisted by any one, she held her ground against the subtlety and perseverance of her assailants. On one of these occasions, turning to the Lord Chancellor Bromley, she requested him to explain the meaning of that passage in the Queen of England's letter, which affirmed that she was subject to the laws of England, and lived under the queen's protection. "I came," said she, "into England to request assistance, and I was instantly imprisoned. Is that protection?" Bromley was taken by surprise, and contented himself by an evasion. "The meaning of their royal mistress," he said, "was plain; but, being subjects, it was not their part to interpret it."[2] Elizabeth was immediately informed of this determined refusal of Mary. She learned, at the same time, the resolution of her commissioners to hear the evidence, and pronounce sentence, although the accused declined to plead; and she wrote privately to Burghley, the lord treasurer, commanding him and the other commissioners not to pronounce sentence till they had repaired to her presence and made a report of the whole proceedings.[3]

It would have been well for Mary had she adhered to this first resolution; but some expressions of Sir Christopher Hatton, the vice-chamberlain, made a deep impression upon her. He had insinuated that her declining to answer would be interpreted as an admission of guilt; he implored her to remember that, even if she refused to appear before the commissioners, (for hitherto Mary had received their deputation in her private chamber,) they must proceed against her in absence; and, at the same moment, she received a brief and menacing note from Elizabeth, in which severity, if she remained obstinate, was blended artfully with a

[1] MS., State-paper Office, October 12, 1586, the Scottish queen's first Answers.

[2] Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 521.

[3] MS. Letter, copy, British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 332. The English queen to Lord Burghley, October 12. MS., State-paper Office, The Queen to the Lord Treasurer and the Commissioners, a draft, in Secretary Davison's hand.

promise of favour, should she relent. It was in these words:—

"You have in various ways attempted to deprive me of my life, and to bring ruin on my kingdom by shedding of blood. I have never proceeded so hardly against you; but, on the contrary, have cherished and preserved you as faithfully as if you were my own self. Your treasons will be proved and made manifest to you in that place where you now are. For this reason, it is our pleasure that you answer to the nobility and barons of my kingdom as you would do to myself were I there in person; and as my last injunction, I charge and command you to reply to them. I have heard of your arrogance; but act candidly, and you may meet with more favour.—ELIZABETH."[1]

We may imagine the bitter smile with which the royal captive read this letter, in which Elizabeth, in the nineteenth year of her imprisonment, took credit to herself for the kindness and protection she had extented to Mary. But there was a menace in its tone which shook her resolution: the last sentence held out a hope of favour: she had no one to advise with; and after a night of much suspense and trouble, she consented to appear before the commissioners.

The court was held on Friday the 14th October, in the great hall at Fotheringay, which had been prepared for the purpose, having, at the upper end, a chair and canopy of state. It bore the arms of England only, and Mary was not suffered to occupy it. On each side of the room were benches for the commissioners. On one hand sat the Lord Chancellor Bromley, the Lord High Treasurer Burghley, with the Earls of Oxford, Kent, Derby, Worcester, Rutland, Cumberland, Warwick, Pembroke, and Lincoln; on the other, the Lords Abergavenny, Zouch, Morley, Stafford, Grey, Lumley, and other peers. Near to these were the knights of the privy-council, Crofts, Hatton, Walsingham, Sadler, Mildmay, and Paulet. At a short distance in advance were placed the two chief justices of England, and the chief baron of the exchequer: opposite them, the other justices and barons, with two doctors of the civil law; and at a table in the middle sat Popham the queen's attorney-general, Egerton the solicitor-general, Gawdy the queen's sergeant-at-law, the clerk of the crown, and two writers to take down the proceedings.[2] Before the bar stood such gentlemen and others as were permitted to be present.

On this day, at nine in the morning, Mary, attended by a guard of halberdiers, and leaning on Sir Andrew Melvil and her physician, entered the court. She was dressed in black, with a veil of white lawn thrown over her. One of her maids of honour carried her train, another a chair covered with crimson velvet, another a footstool; and as she walked to her seat, it was observed that she was lame and required support.[3] On coming into the middle of this august assembly, the queen bowed to the lords: then observing that her chair was not allowed to be placed under the canopy of state, but lower, and at the side, she appeared to feel the indignity. "I am a queen," said she, looking proudly and resentfully for a moment; "I have married a King of France; and my seat ought to be there." But the feeling was brief; and her features assumed again their melancholy cast, as she regarded the multitude of peers, statesmen, and judges. "Alas!" said she, "here are many counsellors, and yet there is not one for me."[4] Having then seated herself with great dignity, the Lord Chancellor stood up and declared, that the queen's

[1] This is translated from the French of Chasteauneuf, (Life of Thomas Egerton, Lord Chancellor, p. 86,) who says he translates it word for word from the English original. Lingard, vol. viii. p. 223.

[2] Howel, 1173.

[3] British Museum, copy, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 333. Order of the Proceedings at the arraignment of the late unfortunate Queen of Scots at Fotheringay.

[4] Chasteauneuf to Henry the Third, from the king's library at Paris, October 30, 1586; printed in Life of Lord Chancellor Egerton, p. 86.

majesty had at last determined to bring her to trial, in consequence of the practices used by her against her life; that she was not moved to this by personal fear, or from any malice, but because, if she failed to do so, she would be guilty of neglecting the cause of God, and of bearing the sword in vain. He was followed by Burghley the lord treasurer, who requested her to hear their commission, which was read by the clerk. On its conclusion, Mary rose up and answered, that it was well known to all now present, that she had come into England to require assistance; and, contrary to all law and justice, had been made a prisoner. As for any commission empowering them to bring her to trial, no one could grant it, because no one was her superior. She was a free princess, an anointed queen, subject to none but God; she had already delivered a protestation to this effect, and she desired her servants to bear witness that her answers were now made under this protestation.[1] Sergeant Gawdy spoke next; entered into a narrative of the whole plot; and brought forward the arguments, by which (he contended) it must be apparent to all that the Scottish queen was acquainted with the conspiracy against the life of Elizabeth. He explained Ballard's dealing with Morgan and Paget in France, the conspiracy for the invasion of England, and his repair to that country for the purpose of completing the plot; he adverted to the transactions between Ballard and Babington; to the formation of the new conspiracy against the life of the English queen; to the renewal of the correspondence between Mary and Babington, which took place at this moment; and he concluded by contending that she had approved of the plot, had promised her assistance, and pointed out the readiest mode for its execution.[2]

To this Mary answered, that she had never seen Anthony Babington, nor received any letter from him, nor herself written any to him; that she knew nothing of Ballard, and had never relieved him; as for the Catholics of England, they were oppressed, and took many things hardly. This she knew, and had represented it to the queen her sister, imploring her to take pity on them. She acknowledged, also, that she had received offers of assistance from anonymous correspondents, but she had not embraced such offers; and how was it possible for a captive, shut up in prison, to search out the names or the intentions of unknown persons, or to hinder what they attempted? It was possible that Babington had written such a letter as he described, but let them prove that it had come into her hands;[3] and as for her own letters, let them produce them, and she would know what to answer.

Copies of the letter from Babington to the Queen of Scots, and of Mary's alleged answer, were then read; Babington's written confession was also quoted, besides the confessions of Dun, Titchbourne, and Ballard, three of his fellow-conspirators; and it was contended by the Attorney-General Puckering, and by the Lord Treasurer Burghley, that nothing could be clearer than the evidence thus adduced, of direct connivance and approval. Mary, with great readiness, replied, that all this evidence was second-hand, or hearsay. They spoke of the letters which she had received, of the answers she had sent; and they brought forward copies of a long letter from a man whom she had never seen, and a detailed answer, point by point, which she had never written. Was this garbled and manufactured evidence to be produced against her?[4] Let them produce the originals of these letters, if such originals ever existed. If Babington's letter was in

1 Camden, in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 522.

2 MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 333. Howel's State Trials, vol. i. pp. 1171, 1182.

3 Camden, p. 522.

4 Avis de ce qui a este faict en Angleterre par Monsieur de Bellievre sur les affaires de la Royne d'Escosse. Published in Egerton's Life of Lord Chancellor Egerton, pp. 98, 103.

cipher, as was alleged, she would then be able to compare the cipher with the copy now before them, to test the one by the other, and to discover whether it really was written in her alphabet or secret cipher, of which it was possible that her enemies might, by some treachery or other, have procured a copy. And as for her alleged letter to Babington, if it, too, was written in cipher, and the original had been intercepted by them, why was it not now produced? If she was entitled to call for the original of Babington's alleged letter to her, much more were her accusers bound to produce the original of her pretended letter to Babington. She would then be able to examine it, to disprove it, and to detect the fraud which had been practised against her. At present she must be contented with a simple and solemn asseveration that she had not written the letters which had been now read, and that she was guiltless of any plot against the life of the Queen of England.

"I do not deny," said she, weeping, "that I have longed for liberty, and earnestly laboured to procure it. Nature impelled me to do so; but I call God to witness, that I have never conspired the death of the Queen of England, or consented to it. I confess that I have written to my friends, and solicited their assistance in my escape from her miserable prisons, in which she has now kept me a captive queen for nineteen years; but I never wrote the letters now produced against me. I confess, too, that I have written often in favour of the persecuted Catholics; and had I been able, or even now at this moment were I able, to save them from their miseries by shedding my own blood, I would have done it, and would now do it: but what connexion has this with any plot against the life of the queen? and how can I answer for the dangerous designs of others, which are carried on without my knowledge? It was but lately," she added, "that I received a letter from some unknown persons, entreating my pardon if they attempted anything without my knowledge."[1]

To this Burghley, who had taken all along a most active part against her, undertook to reply; insisting strongly on the written confession of Babington, and the declarations of her own secretaries, Curle and Nau. This confession, and these declarations, subscribed by the parties themselves who made them, were now on the table; and they proved, he said, in the clearest manner, the correspondence between the queen and Babington. The whole history of it was developed point by point; it was opened by the brief notes written sometimes by Curle, sometimes by Nau; it was they who had deciphered the letters of Babington, and communicated their contents to their mistress. Nay, the exact manner had been specified, in which the answer had been prepared by Nau. It was composed partly from minutes by the queen, and from verbal dictation; it was written out at length in French, revised by Mary, translated and put into cipher by Curle, and then secretly sent to its destination. The letters also of the Scottish queen to Englefield, of a date as far back as 9th October 1584, proved, as he said, that the great plot for the invasion of England was then in agitation; her letter to Charles Paget, on the 21st of May last, (1586,) shewed its resumption at that period; the letter of Charles Paget to the Scottish queen, of the 29th May, connected her with Ballard and Mendoza the Spanish ambassador; and the letters of the 27th July, to Lord Paget, Sir Francis Englefield, Mendoza, the Bishop of Glasgow, and Charles Paget, corroborated not only the confessions of the conspirators, but the contents of the letters between her and Babington, and the written testimony of her own secretaries.

During this address of the Lord Treasurer, he had occasion to mention the Earl of Arundel, as implicated in some degree with the conspiracy; upon which Mary burst into tears,

[1] Avis de Monsieur Bellievre, p. 103. Camden, p. 523.

and lamented, with passionate expressions, the calamities which the noble house of Howard had endured for her sake; but, soon drying her eyes, and reassuming her dignity and composure, she once more, in reply to the arguments of the Lord Treasurer, asseverated her innocence of any plot against the queen's life. What Babington (she said) might, or might not confess against her, she was ignorant of; neither was it possible for her to say or discover, whether this written confession was in his handwriting or not. But why had they executed him before they had confronted him with herself, and permitted her to examine him? If he were now before them, she would have so dealt with him, that the truth would have come out; but they had taken good care to make this impossible. And the same thing might be said of Nau and Curle; why was she not confronted with them? Why was she not permitted to examine them? They, at least, were alive; they might have been here if her adversaries had felt confident that they would have corroborated their written confessions. Curle, she was assured, was an honest man, though it was strange to find one in his station adduced as a witness against her. Nau was a more politic and talented person; he had been secretary to the Cardinal Lorraine, and she had received recommendations in his favour from her brother, the French king; but she was by no means assured that hope, or fear, or reward, might not have influenced him to give false evidence against her; and it was well known that he had Curle at his beck, and could make him write whatever he pleased. It was asserted truly, that her letters were written, and put into cipher, by these secretaries. But what security had she, that they had not inserted into them such things as she had never dictated? Was it not possible, also, that they might have received letters addressed to her, which they never delivered? was it not possible that they might have answered letters in her name, and in her cipher, which she had never seen? "And am I," said she, with great animation and dignity; "am I, a queen, to be convicted on such evidence as this? Is it not apparent that the majesty and safety of princes falls to the ground, if they are to depend upon the writings and testimony of their secretaries? I have delivered nothing to them, but what nature dictated to me under the desire of recovering my liberty; and I claim the privilege of being convicted by nothing but mine own word or writing. If they have written anything which may be hurtful to the queen, my sister, they have written it altogether without my knowledge: let them bear the punishment of their inconsiderate boldness. Sure I am, that if they were here present, they would clear me of all blame in this cause: and still more certain am I, that had my papers not been seized, and were I not thus deprived of my notes and letters, I could have more successfully and minutely answered every point which has been so bitterly argued against me."[1]

In the course of these proceedings (for it would be unjust to call that a trial where the prisoner was deprived of counsel, not permitted access to her papers, and debarred from calling witnesses) Mary made a direct attack on Secretary Walsingham, in speaking of the facility with which her letters and ciphers might be counterfeited. "What security have I," said she, "that these are my very ciphers? A young man, lately in France, has been detected forging my characters. Think you, Mr Secretary, that I am ignorant of your devices used so craftily against me? Your spies surrounded me on every side; but you know not, perhaps, that some of your spies on me proved false, and brought intelligence to me. And if such have been his doings, my lords," she continued, appealing to the assembly, "how can I be assured that he hath not counterfeited my ciphers to bring me to my

[1] MS., British Museum, Caligula, ix. fol. 383. Howel's State Trials, vol. i. pp. 1182, 1183. Also Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 523.

death? Has he not already practised against my life and that of my son?" Upon this, Walsingham, rising in his place, warmly disclaimed the imputation. "I call God to witness," said he, "that, as a private person, I have done nothing unbeseeming an honest man; nor, as a public servant of my royal mistress, anything unworthy of my office; but I plead guilty to my having been exceeding careful for the safety of the queen, and this realm. I have curiously searched out every practice against both: nor if Ballard the traitor had offered me his help in the investigation, would I have refused it." With this plausible, but really indirect and evasive disavowal, Mary declared herself satisfied; and after some arguments of the lord treasurer and the crown lawyers, which it is unnecessary to notice, the court adjourned till next morning.

The proceedings on the second day were not materially different from the first. Mary was still alone, unassisted, and, it may be added, undismayed; although at times she gave way to tears, and seemed to feel her desolate condition. She renewed her protestation, declining the jurisdiction of the court; and demanded that it should be recorded. As to the plot itself of which she was accused, some little variation took place in her mode of defence. On the former day she had been wholly ignorant of the circumstances which were to be brought against her; and had commenced her defence by a general denial or disavowal of all treasonable correspondence. She was now aware of the evidence, and partially admitted and defended her letters to Morgan, Paget, and Mendoza; she even acknowledged such notes as, by her secretaries acting under her orders, had been sent to Babington;[1] but she again most pointedly asserted that these notes and letters referred solely to the project for her escape. This project, she said, it was perfectly justifiable in her to encourage by every means, even by the invasion of the realm: she then reiterated her denial of being accessary to the conspiracy against the queen's person, and entered into a detail of her repeated offers of accommodation made to that princess. It had been her sincere desire, she affirmed, to remove every ground of dissatisfaction from the mind of her sister; but her proposals were disallowed, or suspected, or despised; so that, remaining a captive, she was driven to practices for her escape. "And now," said she, "with what injustice is this cause conducted against me! My letters are garbled, and wrested from their true meaning: the originals kept from me: no respect shewn to the religion which I profess, or the sacred character I bear as a queen. If careless of my personal feelings, think at least, my lords, of the royal majesty which is wounded through me: think of the precedent you are creating. Your own queen was herself accused of a participation in Wyatt's plot; yet she was innocent; and Heaven is my witness that, although a good Catholic, and anxious for the welfare and safety of all who profess that faith, I would shudder to purchase it at the price of blood. The life of the meanest of my people has been ever dear to me; and far rather would I plead with Esther, than take the sword with Judith; though I know the character that has been given me by my enemies, and how they brand me as irreligious." She then solemnly appealed to God, and to all foreign princes, against the injustice with which she had been treated. "I came into England," she exclaimed, "relying on the friendship and promises of the Queen of England. I came, relying on that token which she sent me. Here, my lords," she said, drawing a ring from her finger, and shewing it to her judges, "here it is; regard it well; it came from your royal mistress; and trusting to that pledge of love and protection, I came amongst you:[2] you can best tell how that pledge has been redeemed. I desire," said she, in conclusion, "that I may have another

[1] Egerton, p. 103, Avis de Monsieur Bellievre.

[2] Courcelles's Negotiations, p. 18, Bannatyne Club edition.

day of hearing. I claim the privilege of having an advocate to plead my cause; or, being a queen, that I may be believed upon the word of a queen."[1]

The task of answering this appeal was again undertaken by Burghley, who recapitulated the evidence against her; Mary frequently interrupting him by asseverations of her innocence, and a demand for more decided proof. It would now have been the time for the commissioners to deliver their opinions, and to pronounce sentence; but, to the surprise of many present, the court broke up, having adjourned their meeting to the 25th October, at Westminster. The alleged ground of this abrupt measure, was the informality of pronouncing sentence before the record, or official report of the proceedings, was completed: the true cause was the secret letter of Elizabeth already quoted.[2]

On the same day on which the court broke up, the high-treasurer repaired to his country seat of Burghley, from which he wrote the following letter to Davison. It is valuable, as illustrating the real character of so noted a statesman as Lord Burghley: the approbation with which he speaks of his own eloquence; the complacent description he gives of his success in counteracting the pity which most generous minds would have felt for Mary's desolate condition; and the cold sneer with which he styles her the "Queen of the Castle," are all in keeping with his former unfeeling witticism, on the probability of the blow falling between her neck and shoulders. Here is his letter.

"Mr Secretary,—Yesternight, upon receipt of your letter, dated on Thursday, I wrote what was thought would be this day's work. The Queen of the Castle was content to appear again afore us in public, to be heard: but, in truth, not to be heard for her defence; for she would say nothing but negatively, that the points of the letters that concerned the practice against the queen's majesty were never by her written, nor of her knowledge. The rest, for invasion, for escaping by force, she said she will neither deny nor affirm. But her intention was, by long artificial speeches, to move pity; to lay all blame upon the queen's majesty, or rather on the council, that all the troubles past did ensue; avowing her reasonable offers and our refusals. And in this her speeches I did so encounter her with reasons out of my knowledge and experience, as she had not that advantage she looked for; as I am assured the auditory did find her case not pitoyable, [and] her allegations untrue, by which means great debate fell yesternight very long, and this day renewed with great stomaching. But we had great reason to prorogue our session till the 25th; and so we of the council will be at court on the 22d; and we find all persons here in commission fully satisfied, as, by her majesty's order, judgment will be given at our next meeting."[3]

The same day, Walsingham wrote on the same subject to Leicester, declaring that even Mary's best friends thought her guilty; and adding, that but for a secret command of Elizabeth, they would have pronounced sentence. This delay and indecision appears to have so greatly annoyed the secretary, that he represented it as a judgment from heaven, that her majesty had no power to proceed against her as her own safety required.[4]

On the 25th of October, the commissioners met in the Star-chamber at Westminster, and the same proofs were adduced against the Scottish queen which had been brought forward at Fotheringay, with the exception that her secretaries, Nau and Curle, were now examined, and corroborated their letters and confessions.[5] The former confessions of these two secretaries had been unsatisfactory to Walsingham and Burghley;[6] they proved the

[1] Camden, pp. 524, 525.

[2] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 333. Howel's State Trials, vol. i. p. 1187.

[3] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 433. Burghley to Davison, October 15, 1586; since, Ellis, vol. i. p. 13.

[4] MS. Letter, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 415, Walsingham to Leicester, October 15, 1586.

[5] Hardwicke Papers, vol. i. p. 224.

[6] Burghley to Walsingham, September 8.

queen to have received letters from Babington, and to have dictated to them certain answers in reply; but, judging from the imperfect papers which remain,[1] there was no certain proof in their confessions that Mary had dictated the passages which implied a knowledge of the conspiracy against Elizabeth's life; and, on this second occasion at Westminster, they merely corroborated their former confessions.[2] But Nau, if we may trust his own account, did more; for he openly asserted that the principal points of accusation against his royal mistress were false; and, refusing to be silenced by Walsingham, who attempted to overawe and put him down, he declared that the commissioners would have to answer to God and all Christian kings, if, on such false charges, they condemned an innocent princess.[3]

Into these proceedings against Mary, at Westminster, it is unnecessary to enter further. At Fotheringay we had the accused without the witnesses; at the Star-chamber we have the witnesses without the accused: for Mary remained at Fotheringay under the morose superintendence of Paulet, whilst the investigation proceeded at Westminster, directed by the indefatigable and unrelenting Burghley. Having heard the evidence, the commissioners, as was to be anticipated, pronounced sentence against the queen: declaring that, since the 1st of June, in the twenty-seventh year of Elizabeth, divers matters had been compassed and imagined within this realm of England, by Anthony Babington and others, with the privity of the Queen of Scots, tending to the hurt, death, and destruction of the royal person of her majesty the Queen of England.[4] They intimated, at the same time, with the object of conciliating the Scottish king, that nothing in this sentence should affect James's title to the English crown; which should remain exactly in the same state as if the proceedings at Fotheringay had never taken place.

A few days after this, parliament met; and after approving and confirming this sentence, unanimously petitioned Elizabeth, as she valued Christ's true religion, the security of the realm, her own life, and the safety of themselves and their posterity, to consent that the sentence against the Queen of Scots should be published. To enforce their request, they called to her remembrance the anger of God against Saul when he spared Agag king of the Amalekites, and his displeasure with Ahab for pardoning Benhadad.[5]

The answer of Elizabeth was striking, and probably sincere, except in the pity and sorrow it expressed for Mary. She acknowledged, with expressions of deep gratitude to God, her almost miraculous preservation; and professed the delight she experienced, after a reign of twenty-eight years, to find her subjects' good-will even greater to her now than at its commencement. Her life, she said, had been "dangerously shot at;" but her sense of danger was lost in sorrow, that one so nearly allied to her as the Queen of Scots should be guilty of the crime. So far had she herself been from bearing her sister any ill-will, that, upon discovering Mary's treasonable practices, she had written her, that if she would privately confess them they should be wrapt up in silence; and now, if the matter had only involved dangers to herself, and not the welfare of her people, she protested that she should willingly pardon Mary. It was only for her people that she, Elizabeth, desired to live; and if her death could bring them a more flourishing condition, or a better prince, she would gladly lay down her life.

After somewhat more in this strain, she informed parliament that their last act had reduced her to great difficulties; and, in dwelling upon the sorrow felt for Mary, she artfully introduced a circumstance which was well calculated to rouse their utmost

[1] Lingard, vol. viii. p. 219.
[2] Ibid., p. 229.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Howel, vol. i. p. 1189.
[5] Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 526.

resentment: telling them that it was but a short while since she had, with her own eyes, seen and read an "oath, by which some persons had engaged to kill her within a month." This was on the 12th November, and two days after, (14th,) the queen sent the commons a message by her vice-chamberlain, Sir Christopher Hatton, requesting them to consider whether they could not devise some gentler expedient, by which her commiseration for the Scottish queen might be allowed to operate, and her life be spared.[1] On the 18th, after much debate, both houses unanimously answered, "that they could find no other way;" and this brief but stern decision was forthwith carried by the lord chancellor and the speaker of the house of commons to the queen, who was then at Richmond. This communication, it was expected, would elicit something direct and definite from Elizabeth; but the answer which she gave was one of studied ambiguity. "If," said she, addressing the chancellor, "I should say unto you that I mean *not* to grant your petition—by my faith, I should say unto you more than perhaps I mean; and if I should say unto you I mean to grant your petition, I should then tell you more than it is fit for you to know: and so I must deliver you an answer answerless."[2]

It was now deemed proper that the captive queen should be informed of these proceedings. Since the breaking up of the court at Fotheringay, she had remained there under the custody of Paulet, whose letters to Walsingham breathed a personal dislike to his prisoner. On the 22d November, Lord Buckhurst, and Mr Beal, the clerk of the privy-council, arrived at Fotheringay, and communicated to her the sentence of death, which had been pronounced by the commissioners, its ratification by parliament, and the earnest petition of both Houses for her immediate execution. They warned her not to look for mercy; spoke severely of her attachment to the Catholic faith, which made her life incompatable with the security of the Reformed opinions; and promised her the ministrations of a Protestant divine in her last hours. The Queen of Scots heard them with the utmost tranquillity, and mildly, but firmly, declined all such religious assistance. She declared that the judgment of the court was unjust, as she was innocent of all consent to the plot against Elizabeth's life; but she implored them, in the name of Christ, to permit her to have the spiritual consolations of her almoner, whom she knew to be in the castle, although debarred from her presence. For a brief period this was granted; but the indulgence was considered too great, and he was once more removed. Further and more studied insults were soon offered. On the day after the arrival of Buckhurst, Paulet entered her chamber without ceremony, and informed her that, as she was now no longer to be considered a queen, but a private woman dead in law, the insignia of royalty must be dispensed with. Mary replied that whatever he or his sovereign might consider her, did not much move her; she was an anointed princess, and had received this dignity from God: into His hands alone would she resign both it and her soul.[3] As for their queen, she as little acknowledged her for her superior, as she did her heretical council for her judges; and, in spite of the indignities they offered, would die, as she had lived, a queen. This spirited answer greatly enraged Paulet, who commanded Mary's attendants to take away the "dais," or cloth of state; and, when they refused, called in some of his own people, who executed the order. He then put on his hat, sat down in her presence, and pointing to the billiard-table which stood in the chamber, ordered it to be removed, remarking that these vain recreations no longer became a person in her situation. Such brutal and insolent conduct

[1] MS. Letter, Sir George Warrender's MS. Collection, Archibald Douglas to the Master of Gray, November 22, 1586, London. Also Archibald Douglas to the King, December 8, Warrender MSS., 1586.

[2] Parliamentary History, vol. iv. p. 298.

[3] Martyre de la Royne d'Escosse. Jebb, vol. ii. pp. 293, 294.

would have disgraced the commonest jailer in the kingdom; and the man who was guilty of this outrage, could plead no order from Elizabeth.[1]

That princess now gave orders that the sentence against the Queen of Scots should be proclaimed to the people; and so highly excited were the citizens in the metropolis with the real or fancied dangers which they had escaped, that the communication was received with every mark of public rejoicing.[2] To Mary it brought no new pang, so far as life was concerned; but she became agitated with the suspicion that Elizabeth, to avoid the odium of a public execution, would endeavour to have her privately assassinated; and this new idea gave her the utmost inquietude.[3] Nor, if we are to believe Camden,[4] were these ideal terrors. Leicester, he affirms, on the first discovery of the conspiracy, had given it as his advice that Mary should be privately poisoned; and had even sent a divine to persuade Secretary Walsingham of the lawfulness of such a course, which he, however, utterly rejected and condemned. So horrid an accusation against Leicester would require some decided proof, which the historian has not given; and it will be afterwards seen that Walsingham's aversion to such a course was exceedingly short-lived. It was at this time that Mary addressed her last letter to Elizabeth, in these touching and pathetic terms:—

"Madam,—I bless God with my whole heart that, by means of your final judgment, He is about to put a period to the wearisome pilgrimage of my life. I make no petition that it should be prolonged, having already but too well known its bitterness: I only now supplicate your highness that, since I cannot hope for any favour from those exasperated ministers who hold the highest offices in your state, I may obtain, from your own sole bounty, these three favours:—

"First, As it would be vain for me to expect a burial in England, accompanied by the Catholic rites practised by the ancient monarchs, your ancestors and mine, and since the sepulchres of my fathers have been broken up and violated in Scotland, I earnestly request that, as soon as my enemies shall have glutted themselves with my innocent blood, my body may be carried by my servants to be interred in holy ground: above all, I could wish in France, where rest the ashes of the queen my most honoured mother. Thus shall this poor body, which has never known repose as long as it was united to my soul, have rest at last, when it and my spirit are disunited.

"Secondly, I implore your majesty, owing to the terror I feel for the tyranny of those to whose charge you have abandoned me, let me not be put to death in secret, but in the sight of my servants and others. These persons will be witnesses to my dying in the faith, and in obedience to the true Church; and it will be their care to rescue the close of my life and the last breathings of my spirit from the calumnies with which they may be assailed by my enemies.

"Thirdly, I request that my servants, who have clung to me so faithfully throughout my many sorrows, may be permitted freely to go where they please, and to retain the little remembrances which my poverty has left them in my will.

"I conjure you, Madam, by the blood of Jesus Christ, by our near relationship, by the memory of Henry the Seventh, our common ancestor, by the title of queen, which I bear even to my death, refuse me not these poor requests, but assure me of your having granted them by a single word under your hand.

"I shall then die, as I have lived,

"Your affectionate Sister and Prisoner,

"MARY THE QUEEN."[5]

[1] Letter of Mary in Jebb, vol. ii. p. 293. Also Bisselii Mariæ Stuartæ Acta, p. 219.

[2] Lingard, vol. viii. p. 233.

[3] Letter of Mary to the Duke of Guise. Jebb, 334.

[4] Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 519.

[5] Jebb, vol. ii. pp. 91, 92.

No answer was ever returned to this pathetic appeal, nor indeed is it absolutely certain that Elizabeth ever received it; but in the meantime some exertions to save the Scottish queen were made by the French king, and by her son the King of Scotland. Henry the Third had never, during the long course of her misfortunes, exhibited for Mary any feelings of personal affection or deep interest, although, from political considerations, he had frequently espoused her cause; but the idea that a queen and a near relative should be arraigned, condemned, and executed, was so new and appalling, that he deemed it imperative to interfere, and sent Monsieur de Bellievre, his ambassador, to present his remonstrances to the English queen. After many affected delays, Elizabeth received him in unusual state upon her throne, and heard his message with a flashing eye and flushed and angry countenance.[1] She restrained her feelings, however, sufficiently to make a laboured reply; pronounced a high encomium upon her own forbearance, promised a speedy and definite answer, protracted the time for more than a month by the most frivolous excuses, and at last drove the ambassador to declare that if Mary was executed, his master must resent it. The English queen, fired at this threat, demanded whether his master had empowered him to use such language; and, having found that it was warranted by Bellievre's instructions, wrote a letter of lofty defiance to Henry, and dismissed his envoy. Aubespine, the resident ambassador, renewed the attempt; but a pretended plot against the life of Elizabeth, which was said to be traced to some of his suite, furnished a subject for a new and bitter quarrel; and this, for a time, interrupted all amicable relations between the two crowns.[2]

On the side of Scotland, James's efforts were not more successful. This young prince had been early informed of the conspiracy by Walsingham, and had written to Elizabeth congratulating her upon the discovery.[3] The English secretary had employed his friend, the Master of Gray, to sound his royal master as to the intended proceedings against the Queen of Scots; and bade that nobleman remind the young king, that any mediation for Mary would come with a bad grace from a prince whose father had received such hard measure at her hands.[4]

To confirm James in these feelings, care had been taken to send him an account of the plot, with full extracts from the alleged intercepted correspondence of the Queen of Scots and Babington. In these letters, James must have perceived the severe terms in which he was spoken of by Mary, and become acquainted with her advice given to Lord Claud Hamilton, to seize his person and place him under a temporary restraint. Such revelations were little calculated to foster or preserve any sentiments of affection in a son towards a mother whom he had never known. Yet all this cannot excuse the coldness and indifference which he manifested. Monsieur de Courcelles, who was then in Scotland, received instructions from the French king to incite the young monarch to interfere for Mary: but he replied that his mother was in no danger; and as for the conspiracy, she must be contented, he said, to drink the ale she had brewed. He loved her as much as nature and duty bound him; but he knew well she bore him as little good-will as she did the Queen of England: her practices had already nearly cost him his crown; and he could be well content she would meddle with nothing but prayer and serving of God.[5]

These selfish and moderate sentiments were far from acceptable to the Scottish nobles and people, who felt the treatment offered to the mother

[1] November 27.
[2] Carte, vol. iii. pp. 613, 614.
[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Master of Gray to Burghley, September 10, 1586.
[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, original draft by Walsingham, September 17, 1586.
[5] October 4. Extract of Monsieur Courcelles's Negotiations, p. 4. Bannatyne edition.

up amid a company of mutinous knavish ministers, whose doctrine I could never approve; but yet I know my religion to be the true one."

In the meantime, the alarming news from England, and the representations of the French king, convinced James that the question was no longer as to the imprisonment, but the life of Mary; and the moment he embraced this idea, his whole conduct changed. He wrote a letter of eleven and half years' remembrance to Elizabeth, and despatched it by Sir William Keith, who was instructed to express himself warmly, and without reserve, upon the subject. He at the same time, and by the same ambassador, addressed a memorial on state to Walsingham, whom he considered his most powerful enemy; and he commissioned Keith, on his arrival at the English court, to co-operate with the French ambassador in all his efforts for the safety of the unhappy princess, whose fate seemed to be at last approaching. He had already written secretly to Archibald Douglas, his ambassador at the English court. But it was announced on good grounds, that Douglas was already in the hands of Elizabeth and Walsingham; and that enemy and traitor, as he had been to the latter's master, he would have his hand as busy in the present case.

On Keith's arrival at the English court, Elizabeth and her ministers attempted to remove the object of his mission by the usual weapons of delay and blandishment. When at last admitted, the queen affected the utmost solicitude for Mary's life; but represented herself as driven to consent to the execution of her sentence by the importunities of her ministers, and the fears of her people. "And yet," said she, turning to the ambassador, "I swear by the living

[1] Elizabeth's letter to James, dated 1st March 1586, is printed in Murdin's State Papers, vol. ii. p. 525. Keith's instructions, dated 2d March, are in the Cotton Library, Caligula, C. viii.

[2] Keith's letter, 7th March 1586, Cotton Library, Caligula, C. viii. Keith was a person of great importance at the court of James, and was afterwards created Earl Marischal of Scotland.

God, that I would give one of my own arms to be cut off, so that any means could be found for us both to live in assurance.[1] I have already," she continued, "saved her life, when even her own subjects craved her death; and now judge for yourselves which is most just, that I who am innocent, or she who is guilty, should suffer."[2] Repeated interviews took place, and Elizabeth on one occasion declared that no human power should ever persuade her to sign the warrant for Mary's execution; but in the meantime the sentence against her had been made public. Leicester, Burghley, and Walsingham advised her death. The people, alarmed by reports of the meditated invasion by Spain, and new plots against their princess, became clamorous on the same subject; and James, agitated by the ill success of Keith, sent him new instructions, with a private letter written in passionate and threatening terms.[3] On communicating it to the English queen, she broke into one of those sudden and tremendous paroxysms of rage, which sometimes shook the council-room, and made the hearts of her ministers quail before her. It was with the greatest difficulty that she was prevented from chasing Keith, who had spoken with great boldness, from her presence. But Leicester, her favourite, at last appeased her, and on the succeeding day she dictated a more temperate reply to the young king. On his side, also, James repented of his violence, and, unfortunately for his own honour, was induced to adopt a milder tone; to write an apologetic letter to Elizabeth; and to despatch the Master of Gray and Sir Robert Melvil with instructions to explain that his "meaning, in all that had hitherto been done," was modest and not menacing.[4] Nothing could be more selfish and pusillanimous than such conduct. The Scottish nation and the nobility were loud in their expressions of indignation. Eager to avenge the disgrace inflicted on their country, the nobles had already armed themselves, to break across the Border, and take the quarrel into their own hands; but the king, who had received a private communication from Walsingham,[5] was thinking more about his succession to the English crown than the peril of his parent; and, intimidated by the violence of Elizabeth, judged it better to conciliate than exasperate. It is difficult to believe that James had any very deep desire to save his mother's life, when he selected so base and unworthy an intercessor as the Master of Gray. The king must have known well that this man had already betrayed her; that he was a sworn adherent of Elizabeth; and that Mary's safety, or return to power and influence, brought danger to this envoy himself. So fully were these Gray's feelings, that in a letter to his friend Archibald Douglas, written as far back as October 11, he described "any good to Mary as a staff for their own heads;" and assured him "he cared not although she were out of the way."[6] The result was exactly what might have been anticipated: Gray, on his arrival at the English court, (29th December,) in his public conferences with Elizabeth and her ministers, and in the open despatches intended for the eyes of the Scottish council, exhibited great apparent activity and interest in the cause of the Scottish queen.[7] But this was all unreal, for secretly he betrayed her; co-operated with Archibald Douglas in his enmity; whispered in Elizabeth's ear the significant proverb, "The dead don't bite;" persuaded her that, although there was much

[1] Sir George Warrender MSS., B. fol. 341, Archibald Douglas to James, December 8, 1586.

[2] MS., Warrender, B. fol. 333, Douglas to the Master of Gray, November 22, 1586.

[3] Warrender MSS., B. 341, Douglas to the King, December 8, 1586.

[4] MS. Letter, copy, Warrender MSS., B. fol. 336, King James to Elizabeth, December 15, 1586.

[5] Warrender MSS., B. fol. 334, a memorial of certain heads to be communicated to the Lord Secretary of Scotland.

[6] Lodge, vol. ii. (8vo edition,) p. 289. See also Murdin, pp. 573-576.

[7] Robertson's Appendix, No. 1., a Memorial for his Majesty, by the Master of Gray, January 12, 1586-7.

clamour, there was little sincerity in his master's remonstrances; and, notwithstanding the honest endeavours of Sir Robert Melvil against his base efforts, encouraged her to proceed to those extremities which she was willing, yet afraid to perpetrate.[1]

In her first interview with these new ambassadors, Elizabeth received their offers with her characteristic violence. They proposed that Mary should demit her right of succession to the English crown to her son. "How is that possible?" said the queen; "she is declared 'inhabil,' and can convey nothing." "If she have no rights," replied Gray, "your majesty need not fear her; if she have, let her assign them to her son, in whom will then be placed the full title of succession to your highness." "What!" said Elizabeth, with a loud voice and great oath, "get rid of one, and have a worse in her place? Nay; then I put myself in a more miserable case than before. By God's Passion, that were to cut mine own throat; and for a duchy or an earldom to yourself, you, or such as you, would cause some of your desperate knaves to kill me. No, by God! your master shall never be in that place." Gray then craved that Mary's life might at least be spared for fifteen days, to give them time to communicate with the king; but this she peremptorily refused. Melvil implored her to give a respite, were it only for eight days. "No," said Elizabeth, rising up, and impatiently flinging out of the apartment, "not for an hour."[2] After such a reception, it was impossible not to anticipate the worst; and although, on a succeeding occasion, the queen appeared somewhat mollified, the ambassadors left her with the conviction that fears for herself, and not any lingering feelings of mercy towards Mary, were the sole causes of her delay.

It was at this time that the Scottish king, having required the ministers of the Kirk to pray for his unhappy mother, then in the toils of her enemies and daily expecting death, received a peremptory refusal. This was the more extraordinary, since James had carefully worded his request so as to remove, as he thought, every possibility of opposition; but finding himself deceived, he directed Archbishop Adamson to offer up his prayers for the queen, in the High Church of the capital. To his astonishment he found, on entering his seat, that one of the recusant ministers, named Cowper, had preoccupied the pulpit. The king addressed him from the gallery; told him that the place had been intended for another; but added that, if he would pray for his mother, he might remain where he was. To this Cowper answered, that he would do as the Spirit of God directed him; a significant reply to all who knew the character of the times, and certainly amounting to a refusal. A scene of confusion ensued. James commanded Cowper to come down from the pulpit; he resisted. The royal guard sprang forward to pull out the intruder; and he descended, denouncing woe and wrath on all who held back; declaring, too, that this hour would rise up in witness against the king, in the great day of the Lord. Adamson then preached on the Christian duty of prayer for all men, with such pathetic eloquence, and so powerfully offered up his intercession for their unfortunate queen, that the congregation separated in tears, lamenting the obstinacy of their pastors.[3]

Meanwhile, reports were circulated in England, which were artfully calculated to inflame the people and to excuse severity towards Mary. It was said one day, that the Spaniards had landed at Milford Haven, and that the Catholics had joined them; the next, that Fotheringay castle was attacked, and that the Queen of Scots had made her escape; then came rumours that the northern counties were already in rebellion, and that a new conspiracy was on foot to slay the queen and set fire to London.[4]

[1] Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 533.

[2] Robertson's Appendix, No. I., Memorial of the Master of Gray, January 12, 1586-7.

[3] Spottiswood, p. 334.

[4] Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 533.

Amidst these fictitious terrors, the privy-council held repeated meetings, and pressed Elizabeth to give her warrant for the execution: Leicester, Burghley, and Walsingham entreated, argued, and remonstrated; but she continued distracted and irresolute between the odium which must follow the deed and its necessity. At last, amid her half sentences and dark hints, they perceived that their mistress wished Mary to be put to death, but had conceived a hope they would spare her the cruelty of commanding it, and find some secret way of despatching her; she even seemed to think that, if their oath to "the association" for her protection did not lead to this, they had promised much, but actually done nothing. From such an interpretation of their engagement, however, they all shrunk. The idea of private assassination was abhorrent, no doubt, to their feelings; but they suspected, also, that Elizabeth's only object was to shift the responsibility of Mary's death from her shoulders to theirs; and that nothing was more likely than that, the moment they had fulfilled her wishes, she should turn round and accuse them of acting without orders. Meanwhile she became hourly more unquiet, forsook her wonted amusements, courted solitude, and often was heard muttering to herself a Latin sentence taken from some of those books of Emblemata, or Aphorisms, which were the fashion of the day: *Aut fer, aut feri; ne feriare, feri.*[1] This continued till the 1st of February, when the queen sent for Mr Davison the secretary, at ten in the morning. On arriving at the palace, he found that the Lord Admiral Howard had been conversing with Elizabeth on the old point—the Scottish queen's execution; and had received orders to send Secretary Davison to her with the warrant, which had already been drawn up by Burghley the lord treasurer,[2] and lay in his possession unsigned. Davison hasted to his chamber, and coming instantly back with it and some other papers in his hand, was called in by Elizabeth, who, after some talk on indifferent topics, asked him what papers he had with him. He replied, divers warrants for her signature. She then inquired whether he had seen the lord admiral, and had brought the warrant for the Scottish queen's execution. He declared he had, and delivered it into the queen's hand; upon which she read it over, called for pen and ink, deliberately signed it, and then looking up, asked him whether he was not heartily sorry she had done so? To this bantering question he replied gravely, that he preferred the death of the guilty before that of the innocent, and could not be sorry that her majesty took the only course to protect her person from imminent danger. Elizabeth then commanded him to take the warrant to the chancellor and have it sealed, with her orders that it should be used as secretly as possible; "and by the way," said she, relapsing again into her jocular tone, "you may call on Walsingham and shew it him: I fear the shock will kill him outright." She added, that a public execution must be avoided. It should be done, she said, not in the open green or court of the castle, but in the hall. In conclusion, she forbade him absolutely to trouble her any further, or let her hear any more till it was done; she, for her part, having performed all that in law or reason could be required.[3]

The secretary now gathered up his papers, and was taking his leave, when Elizabeth stayed him for a short space, and complained of Paulet and others, who might have eased her of this burden. "Even now," said she, "it might be so done, that the blame might be

Ellis's Letters, 2d series, vol. iii. pp. 106, 109.

[1] Either strike or be stricken; strike lest thou be stricken. Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 534.

[2] Caligula, C. ix. fol. 470. For a minute and interesting account of the whole proceedings of Davison, see Sir Harris Nicolas's Life of Davison, pp. 79, 105.

[3] Davison's Defence, drawn up by himself, in Caligula, C. ix. fol. 470, printed by Nicolas, life of Davison, Appendix A.

removed from myself. Would you and Walsingham write jointly, and sound Sir Amias and Sir Drew Drury upon it?" To this Davison consented, promising to let Sir Amias know what she expected at his hands; and the queen, having again repeated, in an earnest tone, that the matter must be closely handled, dismissed him.[1]

All this took place on the morning of the 1st of February. In the afternoon of that day, Davison visited Walsingham, shewed him the warrant with Elizabeth's signature, consulted with him on the horrid communication to be made to Paulet and Drury, and repairing to the chancellor, had the great seal affixed to the warrant. The fatal paper was then left in the hands of that dignitary; and Walsingham and Davison the same evening wrote and despatched a letter to Fotheringay, recommending to her keepers the secret assassination of their royal charge, at the queen their mistress's special request. This letter, taken from an original found amongst Paulet's own papers,[2] was in these calm and measured terms:—

"To Sir Amias Paulet.

"After our hearty commendations. We find by speech lately uttered by her majesty, that she doth note in you both a lack of that care and zeal for her service that she looketh for at your hands; in that you have not in all this time, of yourselves, (without other provocation,) found out some way to shorten the life of that queen; considering the great peril she is subject unto hourly, so long as the said queen shall live. Wherein, besides a lack of love towards her, she noteth greatly that you have not that care of your own particular safeties, or rather of the preservation of religion, and the public good and prosperity of your country, that reason and policy commandeth; especially having so good a warrant and ground for the satisfaction of your consciences towards God, and the discharge of your credit and reputation towards the world, as the oath of 'association,' which you both have to solemnly taken and vowed; and especially the matter wherewith she standeth charged being so clearly and manifestly proved against her: and therefore she taketh it most unkindly that men, professing that love towards her that you do, should in any kind of sort, for lack of the discharge of your duties, cast the burden upon her; knowing, as you do, her indisposition to shed blood, especially of one of that sex and quality, and so near to her in blood as the said queen is.

"These respects, we find, do greatly trouble her majesty, who, we assure you, has sundry times protested that if the regard of the danger of her good subjects and faithful servants did not more move her than her own peril, she would never be drawn to assent to the shedding her blood. We thought it very meet to acquaint you [with] these speeches lately passed from her majesty, referring the same to your good judgments. And so we commit you to the protection of the Almighty. Your most assured friends,

"Francis Walsingham.
"William Davison.

"London, February 1, 1586."[3]

With the letter, Davison sent an earnest injunction that it should be committed to the flames; promising for his part to burn, or, as he styled it, "make a heretic" of the answer. Cruel and morose, however, as Paulet had undoubtedly been to Mary, he was not the common murderer which Elizabeth took him to be; and refused peremptorily to have any hand in her horrid purpose. He received the letter on the 2d of February, at five in the afternoon, and at six the same evening, having communicated it to Drury, returned this answer to Walsingham:—

"Your letters of yesterday, coming to my hands this present day at five in the afternoon, I would not fail, according to your directions, to return my answer with all possible speed;

[1] Nicolas's Life of Davison, p. 84.
[2] Life of Davison, p. 85. Hearne's Robert of Gloucester, vol. ii. p. 676.
[3] Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle, by Hearne, vol. ii. p. 674.

which [I] shall deliver unto you with great grief and bitterness of mind, in that I am so unhappy to have liven to see this unhappy day, in the which I am required, by direction from my most gracious sovereign, to do an act which God and the law forbiddeth. My good livings and life are at her majesty's disposition, and I am ready to lose them this next morrow, if it shall so please her: acknowledging that I hold them as of her mere and gracious favour. I do not desire them to enjoy them but with her highness's good liking; but God forbid that I should make so foul a shipwreck of my conscience, or leave so great a blot to my poor posterity, to shed blood without law and warrant. Trusting that her majesty, of her accustomed clemency, will take this my dutiful answer in good part . . ."[1]

This refusal, as we have seen, was written on the 2d February, in the evening, at Fotheringay; and next morning, (the 3d, Friday,) Davison received an early and hasty summons from Elizabeth, who called him into her chamber, and inquired if he had been with the warrant to the chancellor's. He said he had; and she asked sharply why he had made such haste. "I obeyed your majesty's commands," was his reply, "and deemed it no matter to be dallied with." "True," said she; "yet methinks the best and safest way would be to have it otherwise handled." He answered to this, that, if it was to be done at all, the honourable way was the safest;[2] and the queen dismissed him. But by this time the warrant, with the royal signature, was in the hands of the council; and on that day they addressed a letter, enclosing it, to the Earl of Shrewsbury. This letter was signed by Burghley the lord treasurer, Leicester, Hunsdon, Knollys, Walsingham, Derby, Howard, Cobham, Sir Christopher Hatton, and Davison himself.[3] Yet some fears as to the responsibility of sending it away without the queen's knowledge, made them still hesitate to despatch it. In this interval, Paulet's answer arrived; and as Walsingham, to whom he had addressed it, was sick, (or, as some said, pretended illness,) the task of communicating it to Elizabeth fell on Davison. She read it with symptoms of great impatience; and, breaking out into passionate expressions, declared that she hated those dainty, nice, precise fellows, who promised much, but performed nothing, casting all the burden on her. But, she added, she would have it done without him, by Wingfield. Who this new assassin was, to whom the queen alluded, does not appear.[4]

The privy-council, meanwhile, had determined to take the responsibility of sending off the warrant for the execution upon themselves; and for this purpose intrusted it to Beal, the clerk of the council, who, on the evening of Saturday the 4th of February, arrived with it at the seat of the Earl of Kent, and next day, being Sunday, proceeded to Fotheringay, and communicated it to Sir Amias Paulet and Sir Drew Drury.[5] Intelligence was then sent to the Earl of Shrewsbury, grand marshal of England, who lived at no great distance from Fotheringay; and on Tuesday morning, the 7th February, this nobleman and the Earl of Kent came to the castle with several persons who were to give directions, or to be employed, in the approaching tragedy. For some days before this, Mary's servants had suspected the worst; but the preparations which now took place, and the arrival of so many strangers, threw them into despair. On Tuesday, after dinner at two o'clock, the two earls demanded an audience of the Queen of Scots, who sent word that she was indisposed and in bed; but if the matter were of consequence, she would rise and receive them. On their reply that it could brook no delay, they were admitted

[1] Hearne's Robert of Gloucester, vol. ii. p. 675.

[2] Davison's Apology, in Nicolas's Life, Appendix A.

[3] Ellis's Letters, 2d series, vol. iii. pp. 111, 112.

[4] Davison's Defence; Nicolas's Life of Davison, p. 103; and *id.*, Appendix A.

[5] La Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, in Jebb, vol. ii. p. 512.

after a short interval; and Kent and Shrewsbury coming into the apartment, with Paulet, Drury, and Beal, found her seated at the bottom of her bed, her usual place, with her small work-table before her.[1] Near her stood her physician Burgoin, and her women. When the earls uncovered, she received them with her usual tranquil grace; and Shrewsbury, in few words, informed her that his royal mistress, Elizabeth, being overcome by the importunity of her subjects, had given orders for her execution, for which she would now be pleased to hear the warrant. Beal then read the commission, to which she listened unmoved, and without interrupting him. On its conclusion she bowed her head, and, making the sign of the cross, thanked her gracious God that this welcome news had at last come; declaring how happy she should be to leave a world where she was of no use, and had suffered such continued affliction. She assured the lords that she regarded it as a signal happiness, that God had sent her death at this moment, after so many evils and sorrows endured for His Holy Catholic Church: "That Church," she continued, with great fervour of expression, "for which I have been ready, as I have often testified, to lay down my life, and to shed my blood drop by drop. Alas!" she continued, "I did not think myself worthy of so happy a death as this; but I acknowledge it as a sign of the love of God, and humbly receive it as an earnest of my reception into the number of His servants. Long have I doubted and speculated, for these eighteen or nineteen years, from day to day, upon all that was about to happen to me. Often have I thought on the manner in which the English have acted to imprisoned princes; and after my frequent escapes from such snares as have been laid for me, I have scarce ventured to hope for such a blessed end as this." She then spoke of her high rank, which had so little defended her from cruelty and injustice: born a queen, the daughter of a king, the near relative of the Queen of England, the granddaughter of Henry the Seventh, once Queen of France, and still queen-dowager of that kingdom; and yet, what had all this availed her? She had loved England; she had desired its prosperity, as the next heir to that crown; and, as far as was permitted to a good Catholic, had laboured for its welfare. She had earnestly longed for the love and friendship of her good sister the queen; had often informed her of coming dangers; had cherished, as the dearest wish of her heart, that for once she should meet her in person, and speak with her in confidence; being well assured that, had this ever happened, there would have been an end of all jealousies and dissensions. But all had been refused her; her enemies, who still lived and acted for their own interests, had kept them asunder. She had been treated with ignominy and injustice; imprisoned, contrary to all faith and treaties; kept a captive for nineteen years; "and at last," said she, laying her hand upon the New Testament which was on her table, "condemned by a tribunal which had no power over me, for a crime of which I here solemnly declare I am innocent.[2] I have neither invented, nor consented to, nor pursued any conspiracy for the death of the Queen of England." The Earl of Kent here hastily interrupted her, declaring that the translation of the Scriptures on which she had sworn was false, and the Roman Catholic version, which invalidated her oath. "It is the translation in which I believe," answered Mary, "as the version of our holy Church. Does your lordship think my oath would be better if I swore on your translation, which I disbelieve?"

She then entreated to be allowed the services of her priest and almoner, who was in the castle, but had not been permitted to see her since her removal from Chartley. He would assist her, she said, in her preparations for death, and administer that spiritual

[1] La Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, Jebb, vol. ii. p. 612.

[2] La Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, p. 618.

consolation, which it would be sinful to receive from any one of a different faith. To the disgrace of the nobleman, the request was refused: nor was this to be attributed to any cruelty in Elizabeth, who had given no instructions upon the subject; but to the intolerant bigotry of the Earl of Kent, who, in a long theological discourse, attempted to convert her to his own opinions, offering her, in the place of her confessor, the services of the Protestant Dean of Peterborough, Dr Fletcher, whom they had brought with them. Mary expressed her astonishment at this last unexpected stroke of cruelty; but bore it meekly, as she had done all the rest, although she peremptorily declined all assistance from the dean. She then inquired what time she should die; and the earls having answered, "To-morrow at eight in the morning," made their obeisance, and left the room. On their departure she called her women, and bade them hasten supper, that she might have time to arrange her affairs. Nothing could be more natural, or rather playful, than her manner at this moment. "Come, come," said she, "Jane Kennedy, cease weeping, and be busy. Did I not warn you, my children, that it would come to this? and now, blessed be God! it has come; and fear and sorrow are at an end. Weep not, then, nor lament, but rejoice rather that you see your poor mistress so near the end of all her troubles. Dry your eyes, then, and let us pray together."

Her men-servants, who were in tears, then left the room, and Mary passed some time in devotion with her ladies: after which she occupied herself in counting the money which still remained in her cabinet; dividing it into separate sums, which she intended for her servants; and then putting each sum into a little purse with a slip of paper, on which she wrote, with her own hand, the name of the person for whom it was destined. Supper was next brought in, of which she partook sparingly, as was usual with her; conversing from time to time with Burgoin her physician, who served her; and sometimes falling into a reverie, during which it was remarked that a sweet smile, as if she had heard some good news, would pass over her features, lighting them up with an expression of animated joy, which, much changed as she was by sorrow and ill health, recalled to her poor servants her days of beauty. It was with one of these looks that, turning to her physician, she said, "Did you remark, Burgoin, what that Earl of Kent said in his talk with me: that my life would have been the death, as my death would be the life of their religion? Oh, how glad am I at that speech! Here comes the truth at last, and I pray you remark it. They told me I was to die because I had plotted against the queen; but then arrives this Kent, whom they sent hither to convert me, and what says he? I am to die for my religion." [1]

After supper, she called for her ladies, and asking for a cup of wine, drank to them all, begging them to pledge her; which they did on their knees, mingling their tears in the cup, and asking her forgiveness if they had ever offended her. This she readily gave them, bidding them farewell with much tenderness, entreating in her turn their pardon, and solemnly enjoining them to continue firm in their religion, and forget all their little jealousies, living in peace and love with each other. It would be easier to do so now, she added, since Nau, who had been so busy in creating dissensions, was no longer with them. This was the only subject on which she felt and expressed herself with something like keenness; repeating more than once, that he was the cause of her death, but adding that she forgave him. She next examined her wardrobe, and selected various dresses as presents to her servants, delivering them at the moment, with some kind expression to each. She then wrote to her almoner, lamenting that the cruelty of her enemies had refused her the consolation of his presence with

[1] Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 534. Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, Jebb, vol. ii. p. 625.

her in her last moments, imploring him to watch and pray with her that night, and to send her his absolution.[1] After this she made her will; and lastly, wrote to the King of France. By this time it was two in the morning, and finding herself fatigued, she lay down, having first washed her feet, whilst her women watched and read at her bedside. They observed that, though quite still and tranquil, she was not asleep, her lips moving as if in engaged in secret prayer. It was her custom to have her women read to her at night a portion of the "Lives of the Saints," a book she loved much; and this last night she would not omit it, but made Jane Kennedy choose a portion for their usual devotions. She selected the life entitled "The Good Thief," which treats of that beautiful and affecting example of dying faith and Divine compassion. "Alas!" said Mary, "he was indeed a very great sinner, but not so great as I am. May my Saviour, in memory of His Passion, have mercy on me, as He had on him at the hour of death."[2] At this moment she recollected that she would require a handkerchief to bind her eyes at her execution; and bidding them bring her several, she selected one of the finest, which was embroidered with gold, laying it carefully aside. Early in the morning she rose, observing that now she had but two hours to live; and having finished her toilet, she came into her oratory, and kneeling with her women before the altar, where they usually said mass, continued long in prayer. Her physician then, afraid of her being exhausted, begged her to take a little bread and wine; which she did cheerfully, thanking him at the same time for giving her her last meal.

A knock was now heard at the door, and a messenger came to say that the lords waited for her. She begged to be allowed a short time to conclude her devotions. Soon after, a second summons arriving, the door was opened, and the sheriff alone, with his white wand, walked into the room, proceeded to the altar, where the queen still knelt, and informed her that all was ready. She then rose, saying simply, "Let us go;" and Burgoin her physician, who assisted her to rise from her knees, asking her at this moment whether she would not wish to take with her the little cross and ivory crucifix which lay on the altar, she said, "Oh yes, yes! it was my intention to have done so: many, many thanks for putting me in mind!" She then received it, kissed it, and desired Annibal, one of her suite, to carry it before her. The sheriff, walking first, now conducted her to the door of the apartment; on reaching which, her servants, who had followed her thus far, were informed that they must now turn back, as a command had been given that they should not accompany their mistress to the scaffold. This stern and unnecessary order was received by them with loud remonstrances and tears; but Mary only observed, that it was hard not to suffer her poor servants to be present at her death. She then took the crucifix in her hand, and bade them affectionately adieu; whilst they clung in tears to her robe, kissed her hand, and were with difficulty torn from her, and locked up in the apartment. The queen after this proceeded alone down the great staircase, at the foot of which she was received by the Earls of Shrewsbury and Kent, who were struck with the perfect tranquillity and unaffected grace with which she met them. She was dressed in black satin, matronly, but richly, and with more studied care than she was commonly accustomed to bestow. She wore a long veil of white crape, and her usual high Italian ruff; an Agnus Dei was suspended by a pomander chain round her neck, and her beads of gold hung at her girdle.[3] At the bottom of the staircase she found Sir Andrew Melvil, her old affectionate servant, and master of her household, waiting to take his last farewell. On seeing her he flung himself on his knees at

[1] The letters are preserved, and will be found printed in Jebb, vol. ii. pp. 627, 630.

[2] Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, Jebb, vol. ii. p. 631.

[3] See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XV.

her feet, and bitterly lamented it should have fallen on him to carry to Scotland the heart-rending news of his dear mistress's death. "Weep not, my good Melvil," said she, "but rather rejoice that an end has at last come to the sorrows of Mary Stuart. And carry this news with thee, that I die firm in my religion, true to Scotland, true to France. May God, who can alone judge the thoughts and actions of men, forgive those who have thirsted for my blood! He knows my heart; He knows my desire hath ever been, that Scotland and England should be united. Remember me to my son," she added. "Tell him I have done nothing that may prejudice his kingdom of Scotland. And now, good Melvil, my most faithful servant, once more I bid thee farewell." She then earnestly entreated that her women might still be permitted to be with her at her death; but the Earl of Kent peremptorily refused, alleging that they would only disturb everything by their lamentations, and be guilty of something scandalous and superstitious; probably dipping their handkerchiefs in her blood. "Alas, poor souls!" said Mary, "I will give my word and promise they will do none of these things. It would do them good to bid me farewell; and I hope your mistress, who is a maiden queen, hath not given you so strait a commission. She might grant me more than this, were I a far meaner person. And yet, my lords, you know I am cousin to your queen, descended from the blood of Henry the Seventh, a married Queen of France, and an anointed Queen of Scotland. Surely, surely they will not deny me this last little request: my poor girls wish only to see me die."[1] As she said this, a few tears were observed to fall, for the first time; and after some consultation, she was permitted to have two of her ladies and four of her gentlemen beside her. She then immediately chose Burgoin her physician, her almoner, surgeon, and apothecary, with Jane Kennedy and Elizabeth Curle. Followed by them, and by Melvil bearing her train, she entered the great hall, and walked to the scaffold, which had been erected at its upper end. It was a raised platform, about two feet in height, and twelve broad, surrounded by a rail, and covered with black. Upon it were placed a low chair and cushion, two other seats, and the block. The queen regarded it without the least change of countenance, cheerfully mounted the steps, and sat down with the same easy grace and dignity with which she would have occupied her throne. On her right were seated the Earls of Kent and Shrewsbury, on her left stood the sheriffs, and before her the two executioners. The Earl of Kent, the Dean of Peterborough, Sir Amias Paulet, Sir Drew Drury, Beal the clerk of the privy-council, and others, stood beside the scaffold; and these, with the guards, officers, attendants, and some of the neighbouring gentry, who had been permitted to be present, made up an assembly of about two hundred in all. Beal then read the warrant for her death, which she heard with apparent attention; but those near her could see, by the sweet and absent expression of her countenance, that her thoughts were far off.

When it was finished, she crossed herself, and addressed a few words to the persons round the scaffold. She spoke of her rights as a sovereign princess, which had been invaded and trampled on, and of her long sorrows and imprisonment; but expressed the deepest thankfulness to God that, being now about to die for her religion, she was permitted, before this company, to testify that she died a Catholic, and innocent of having invented any plot, or consented to any practices against the queen's life. "I will here," said she, "in my last moments accuse no one; but when I am gone, much will be discovered that is now hid, and the objects of those who have procured my death be more clearly disclosed to the world."

Fletcher the Dean of Peterborough now came up upon the scaffold, and, with the Earls of Kent and Shrews-

[1] La Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, Jebb, vol. ii. pp. 635, 636.

bury, made an ineffectual attempt to engage Mary in their devotions; but she repelled all their offers, at first mildly, and afterwards, when they insisted on her joining with them in prayer, in more peremptory terms. It was at this moment that Kent, in the excess of his Puritanism, observing her intensely regarding the crucifix, bade her renounce such antiquated superstitions. "Madam," said he, "that image of Christ serves to little purpose, if you have Him not engraved upon your heart." "Ah," said Mary, "there is nothing more becoming a dying Christian than to carry in his hands this remembrance of his redemption. How impossible is it to have such an object in our hands and keep the heart unmoved!"[1]

The Dean of Peterborough then prayed in English, being joined by the noblemen and gentlemen who were present; whilst Mary, kneeling apart, repeated portions of the Penitential Psalms in Latin,[2] and afterwards continued her prayers aloud in English. By this time, the dean having concluded, there was a deep silence, so that every word was heard. Amid this stillness she recommended to God His afflicted Church, her son the King of Scotland, and Queen Elizabeth. She declared that her whole hope rested on her Saviour; and although she confessed that she was a great sinner, she humbly trusted that the blood of that immaculate Lamb, which had been shed for all sinners, would wash all her guilt away. She then invoked the blessed Virgin and all the saints, imploring them to grant her their prayers with God; and finally declared that she forgave all her enemies. It was impossible for any one to behold her at this moment without being deeply affected: on her knees, her hands clasped together and raised to Heaven, an expression of adoration and divine serenity lighting up her features, and upon her lips the words of forgiveness to her persecutors. As she finished her devotions she kissed the crucifix, and making the sign of the cross, exclaimed, in a clear, sweet voice, "As Thine arms, O my God, were spread out upon the cross, so receive me within the arms of Thy mercy: extend Thy pity, and forgive my sins!"

She then cheerfully suffered herself to be undressed by her two women, Jane Kennedy and Elizabeth Curle, and gently admonished them not to distress her by their tears and lamentations; putting her finger on her lips, and bidding them remember that she had promised for them. On seeing the executioner come up to offer his assistance, she smiled, and playfully said, she had neither been used to such grooms of the chamber, nor to undress before so many people. When all was ready, she kissed her two women, and, giving them her last blessing, desired them to leave her, one of them having first bound her eyes with the handkerchief which she had chosen for the purpose. She then sat down, and, clasping her hands together, held her neck firm and erect, expecting that she was to be beheaded in the French fashion, with a sword, and in a sitting attitude. Those who were present, and knew nothing of this misconception, wondered at this; and in the pause, Mary, still waiting for the blow, repeated the psalm, "In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted: let me never be put to confusion."[3] On being made aware of her mistake, she instantly knelt down, and, groping with her hands for the block, laid her neck upon it without the slightest mark of trembling or hesitation. Her last words were, "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit, for Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." At this moment the tears and emotions of the spectators had reached their height,

[1] Martyre de Marie Stuart, Royne d'Escosse, Jebb, vol. ii. pp. 47, 200, 307; and same volume, Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, p. 637.

[2] The Psalms, as numbered in the reformed version, were xxxi., li., and xci. In the Vulgate, Miserere mei Deus; In te, Domine, speravi; Qui habitat in adjutorio.—Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, in Jebb, vol. ii. p. 638. Lingard, vol. viii. p. 248.

[3] In te, Domine, confido: non confundar in æternum.

and appear, unfortunately, to have shaken the nerves and disturbed the aim of the executioner, so that his first blow was ill directed, and only wounded his victim. She lay, however, perfectly still, and the next stroke severed the head from the body. The executioner then held the head up and called aloud, "God save the queen!" "So let all Queen Elizabeth's enemies perish!" was the prayer of the Dean of Peterborough; but the spectators were dissolved in tears, and one deep voice only answered, Amen. It came from the Earl of Kent.[1]

An affecting incident now occurred. On removing the dead body, and the clothes and mantle which lay beside it, Mary's favourite little dog, which had followed its mistress to the scaffold unperceived, was found nestling under them. No entreaty could prevail on it to quit the spot; and it remained lying beside the corpse, and stained in the blood, till forcibly carried away by the attendants.[2]

CHAPTER VI.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1586-7—1590.

THE conduct of Elizabeth on the death of the Queen of Scots was marked by much dissimulation and injustice. After having signed the warrant for her execution, commanded it to be carried to the Seals, and positively interdicted Davison, to whom she delivered it, from any further communication with her till it was obeyed, she suddenly turned fiercely round upon him and her council, and cast on them the whole guilt of Mary's blood. In a moment she denied, or pretended to forget, everything which she had done. She had declared to Sir Robert Melvil, that she would not spare his royal mistress's life for one hour; now she swore vehemently that she never intended to take it. She had assured Davison, with a great oath, that she meant the execution to go forward; now she loudly protested that she had commanded him to keep the warrant till he received further orders. She had laboured anxiously with Paulet to have Mary secretly made away with; and now she did not scruple to call God to witness, under awful obtestations, that her determined resolution had been all along to save her life.[3] And her subsequent conduct was perfectly in character with all this. On the day after the execution, Lord Shrewsbury wrote from Fotheringay to the court, which was then at Greenwich. Next morning, at nine, his letters were brought to the palace by his son Henry Talbot, and the news became public. Soon after, the bells of the city, and the blazing of bonfires, proclaimed the happiness of the people.[4] It was impossible that these demonstrations should have escaped the notice of Elizabeth; and we know from Davi-

[1] Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, p. 641. Martyre de Marie Stuart, Jebb, vol. ii. p. 308. Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 535. Ellis's Letters, 2d series, vol. iii. p. 117.

[2] Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, Jebb, vol. ii. p. 641. Ellis's Letters, 2d series, vol. iii. p. 117.

[3] *Supra*, p. 149. Life of Thomas Egerton, Lord Chancellor, p. 119. Chasteauneuf to Henry III., 28th February 1587. Also MS. Minutes of Carey's Message, Warrender MSS.

[4] Life of Egerton, pp. 117, 119. Letter of Chasteauneuf to Henry III., 28th February 1587. It ought to be remembered that Chasteauneuf uses the new style.

son, every word of whose "Apology" carries truth and conviction with it, that the queen that same night was made aware of Mary's execution;[1] but she took no notice, and kept an obstinate silence. Apparently none of her ministers dared to allude to the event; and when, after four days, the news was at last forced upon her, she broke into a hypocritical passion of astonishment, tears, and indignation. She upbraided her councillors with having purposely deceived her,[2] chased Burghley from her presence, and committed Secretary Davison to the Tower. It was in vain that this upright and able, but most unfortunate of men, pleaded, with all the energy of truth, the commands of his sovereign for everything that he had done. She knew he had no witnesses of their conversation; charged him with falsehood and disobedience; compelled Burghley, who must have been well assured of his innocence, to draw up a severe memorial against him; had him tried before the Star-chamber; degraded him from his office of secretary; inflicted on him a fine which amounted to absolute ruin; and never afterwards admitted him to the least enjoyment of her favour.[3]

All this was in keeping with the subtlety and disregard of truth which sometimes marked Elizabeth's proceedings, when she had any great object to gain. It was part of a premeditated plan by which she hoped to mislead Europe, and convince its states that she was really guiltless of Mary's blood: but ultimately it had no effect on the continent; and it was too palpably fictitious to be successful for a moment in Scotland, where the facts were well known. In that country, the news of Mary's execution was received with a universal burst of indignation, and open threats of revenge. But the English wardens, Lord Scrope and Sir John Foster, were provided against immediate attack; and the season of the year, which was seed-time, rendered it difficult for the Scots to assemble in any force.[4]

It was Mr Roger Ashton, a gentleman of James's bed-chamber, whom he had sent to London some time before this, that brought the king the first certain intelligence of his mother's death. Ashton arrived in Edinburgh about the seventh day after the execution; and Lord Scrope, who had despatched a spy to watch James's motions, wrote in alarm to Walsingham, that the monarch was grievously offended, and had sworn that so foul an act of tyranny and injustice should not pass unrevenged.[5] The feelings, however, of this prince were neither deep nor lasting. Even at this sad moment, selfishness and the assurance of undivided sovereignty neutralised his resentment; and he suffered some expressions of satisfaction to escape him, which his chief minister, Secretary Maitland, did not choose should reach any but the most confidential ears.[6] Meantime, as Ashton's information was secret, James took no public notice of it, but sent in haste for Lord Maxwell, Kerr of Ancrum, and young Fernyhirst.[7] These were reckoned amongst his most warlike Border leaders; and whilst the country rang with threats of revenge, the king shut himself up in his palace, and held conference with them and his most confidential nobles.

Amid these consultations, Mr Robert Carey was despatched by the English queen to convey her apology to Scotland. This young courtier was the son of Lord Hunsdon, Elizabeth's cousin-german, and she selected him

[1] Sir Harris Nicolas's Life of Davison, p. 268.

[2] Wright, Life and Times of Elizabeth, vol. ii. p. 332. Wolley to Leicester, Sunday, 1586. This Sunday was the 12th February.

[3] Nicolas's Life of Davison, pp. 82, 83; and Appendix, pp. 235, 236, 260, 263.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Sir John Foster to Walsingham, 26th February 1586-7. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Scrope to Walsingham, 14th February 1586-7.

[5] Lord Scrope to Walsingham. Queen Elizabeth and her Times, vol. ii. p. 333, 21st February 1586-7. Also State-paper Office, B.C., Sir H. Woddrington to Walsingham, 25th February 1586-7.

[6] MS., Calderwood. British Museum, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 974.

[7] Lord Scrope to Walsingham, 21st February 1586-7. Wright's Elizabeth, vol. ii. p. 333.

as a personal favourite of the Scottish king. He carried with him a letter, written in her own hand, in which she expressed the excessive grief which overwhelmed her mind, in consequence of what she termed "the miserable accident which had befallen, far contrary to her meaning;"[1] and he was instructed to throw the entire blame of the tragedy at Fotheringay upon Davison and her council. On arriving at Berwick, Carey forwarded a letter requesting an audience; but this the king declined to grant till the envoy had stated, on his honour, whether his mother, the Queen of Scots, was dead or alive; and when it was answered that she was executed, James peremptorily refused to see the ambassador, and commanded him to proceed no further into Scotland. He added, however, that he would send some members of his council to Berwick, to whom the letter and message of the English queen might be delivered.

On any other occasion the wrath of Elizabeth would have blazed high and fierce at such an indignity; but at this moment she was placed in circumstances which compelled her to digest the affront; and Carey communicated her false and ungenerous version of the story of Mary's death to Sir Robert Melvil and the Laird of Cowdenknowes, who met him for this purpose at Berwick.[2] All this failed, as may readily be believed, to convince James, or appease the general indignation of the people. By this time, the execution of the Scottish queen, with its affecting details, was known throughout the country; and whatever may have been the king's secret resolutions upon the subject, he felt that it would be almost impossible to resist the deep and increasing current of popular fury which was sweeping on to its revenge.

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Woddrington to Walsingham, 25th February 1586-7. Also, Warrender MSS., vol. A. p. 240. MS. Letter, Elizabeth to James.

[2] Warrender MSS., vol. A. p. 241. Mr Carey's Credit. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Woddrington to Walsingham, 10th March 1586-7.

Many symptoms daily occurred to shew this: already the Scottish Border chiefs had so strictly waylaid every road and pass, that not a letter or scrap of intelligence could be conveyed to the English court; three Scottish scouts, with troopers trained to the duty, and armed to the teeth, were stationed at Linton Bridge, Coldingham Moor, and beyond Haddington, who watched day and night, and pounced on every packet. The system of secret intelligence was at a stand; Walsingham pined for news, and complained that his "little blue-cap lads," who used to bring him word of all occurrences, were no more the men he had known them. Although the season of the year was unfavourable, the Borders were already stirring; some minor Scottish forays took place; and Bothwell, whose power was almost kingly on the marches, intimated unequivocally, that he only delayed his blow that it might fall the more heavily. He refused to put on mourning, striking his mailed glove on his breast, and declaring that the best "dule weed" for such a time, was a steel coat. Nor did he stand alone in these sentiments. Lord Claud Hamilton and his brother Arbroath offered, on the moment, to raise three thousand men, and carry fire and sword to the gates of Newcastle; whilst Buccleuch, Cessford, and Fernyhirst were only restrained from an outbreak by the positive injunctions of the king, and stood full armed and fiery-eyed, straining like blood-hounds in the slip, ready to be let loose on a moment's warning against England.

The first circumstance which offered any perceptible check to these dread appearances, was the arrival of an able letter addressed by Walsingham to Sir John Maitland of Thirlstane, the Scottish secretary of state, which was evidently meant for the king's eye. Thirlstane, originally bred to the law, was then high in his master's favour, and had risen by his talents as a statesman to be his most confidential minister. He was the son of Sir Richard Maitland, and younger brother

of the Secretary Lethington; and a though his powers were less brilliant and commanding than those wielded by that extraordinary man, his good sense, indefatigable application to business, and personal intrepidity, made him a valuable servant to his sovereign, and a formidable antagonist to the higher nobility, who envied and disliked him. To him, therefore, Walsingham wisely addressed this letter, or rather memorial, in which he argued the question of peace or war, and pointed out the extreme folly and impolicy of those counsels which, at such a moment, urged the young king to a rupture with England. His reasons were well calculated to make an impression upon James.[1] Adverting to the injustice of the quarrel, he described, with great force of argument, the effects that a war with England must inevitably produce on his title to the succession after the queen's death, and the certain alienation of the whole body of the English nobility and people from a prince who first revived the ancient and almost forgotten enmity between the two nations, and then hoped to be welcomed as the successor of so great and popular a princess as Elizabeth. As for Spain and France, on whose assistance it was reported he chiefly depended, could he for a moment imagine that Spain would prove true to him?—a country which hated him for his religion; or France, whose policy was to counteract, by every possible method, an event which must be so fatal to her power, as the union, whether by conquest or otherwise, of the crowns of England and Scotland? Could he believe that the French monarch would assist him to a conquest which, if completed, must threaten his own crown? Had he forgotten that the monarchs of England still insisted on their right to the throne of France? Besides, could it be credited for an instant, that the king of that country would ever cordially unite his interests with a monarch so nearly allied as James to the family of Guise; a house which Henry hated in his heart, and which he suspected to aim at his deposition?

There can be no doubt that these arguments of so far-sighted a statesman as Walsingham were not thrown away eventually upon James; but at the moment the impression was scarcely perceptible, and for some time everything portended war.

The Scottish Borders, which during the winter and spring had been kept in tolerable quietness, broke into open hostility as the summer advanced. Six successive Scottish forays swept with relentless havoc through the middle marches; and Sir Cuthbert Collingwood, who commanded in those parts, found himself too weak to restrain the incursions of the fierce marauders of Cessford, Fernyhirst, Bothwell, and Angus. In a piteous letter to Walsingham, he described the country as having been reduced to a desert, wasted with fire and sword, and filled with lamentation and dismay;[2] and he remonstrated with the Scottish wardens in strong terms. But so little impression did Collingwood's complaints make on the Scottish government, and so inadequate was the assistance sent him by his own, that Buccleuch, Cessford, and Johnston, with a force of two thousand men, attacked him in his castle at Eslington, slew seventeen of his garrison, took one of his sons prisoner, severely wounded another, and but for the fleetness of his horse, had made captive the warden himself.

It seems difficult to reconcile these flagrant outrages, which continued more or less throughout the year 1587, though unnoticed by our general historians, with James's warm coalition with Elizabeth in 1588. The probable explanation may be that the young King of Scots, without serious intentions of war, was not displeased that Elizabeth should have a little temporary experience of his power of

[1] His letter, which is very long, is printed entire by Spottiswood, pp. 359-362.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Collingwood to Walsingham, July 12, 1587. Ibid., B.C., same to same, May 21, 1587. Ibid., B.C., same to same, with enclosure, June 23, 1587; and ibid., same to same, August 23, 1587.

disturbing her; that he was not annoyed by such excesses; and even, as Foster asserted and Burghley suspected, secretly encouraged them.[1] He knew that Elizabeth was anxious to conciliate him, and had determined, at all hazards, to purchase peace with Scotland; and he, on his side, had resolved that he would not sell it too cheap. He was well aware of the embarrassments with which the English queen was now surrounded. The mighty preparations of Spain against England were no secret; the rebellion of Tyrone in Ireland was at its height; in Scotland the Catholic lords, Huntly, Errol, Angus, Maxwell, and their adherents, were powerful, warlike, and stirring, animated with the bitterest animosity against Elizabeth, whom they detested as the murderess of their queen and the implacable enemy of their religion. Another thorn in the side of England was the constant friendly intercourse between the Irish insurgents and the Scottish Isles. From these nurseries of warlike seamen and soldiers, strong reinforcements had already joined Tyrone; and the chiefs, who were as fierce and potent as so many little sea kings, drove a lucrative trade by serving him against England at a high price. This was another weapon in the hand of James. By means of his lieutenants, Huntly and Argyle, to whom the administration of the northern parts of his dominions was intrusted, he could let loose the Islesmen against Elizabeth, or detain them at home, as suited his policy; and that queen repeatedly requested him to exert this influence in her favour. To do this, however, with greater profit to himself, the king was not unwilling she should feel his power; and, with this view, he shut his eyes to the Border inroads, delayed remonstrating with Huntly on his intrigues with Spain, refused to apprehend the Jesuits who were lurking in his dominions, and gave himself no trouble to check the rising animosity against England. Yet in his heart he had no inclination for war. He felt the truth of Walsingham's argument, that any prolonged struggle at this moment with England would be fatal to his hopes of succession; and he flattered himself that he had the reins over the Catholic lords and the Spanish intriguers so completely in his hands, that he could command peace with England at whatever moment the queen chose to have his amity on his own terms. In such a hope it turned out that he was deceived. The Catholic party, supported by the money of Spain, commanding nearly all the northern counties, and having with them the sympathies of the people, who were enraged at the execution of Mary, gained in a short time a strength on which he had not calculated, and far from being bridled, for some time dictated terms to him. But it is time to return from this digression to the course of events in Scotland.

The king, who was now on the eve of his majority, assembled a convention of his nobility at Edinburgh, and determined to despatch ambassadors to the courts of France and Denmark.[2] To Henry the Third he proposed a renewal of the ancient league between the two kingdoms; whilst to the Danish monarch he made overtures of a matrimonial alliance.[3] But Henry, who was at this moment disposed to be on favourable terms with England, treated James's advances coldly; and although the Danish alliance eventually took place, its first suggestion does not appear to have been very cordially welcomed.[4]

The same convention was signalised by an event which brought a merited punishment on one of the basest of men. This was the fall of the Master of Gray, who was tried for high treason, condemned, and on the point of

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Robert Carvyle to Walsingham, December 4, 1587. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Burghley to Fowler, April 17, 1588.

[2] Moyse's Memoirs, Bannatyne edition, p. 64.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Carvyle to Walsingham, June 3, 1587.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, A. B. to Walsingham, August 19, 1587. Also Car to Walsingham, B.C., State-paper Office, September 11, 1587. Moyse's Memoirs, p. 65.

being executed, when his life was spared, and the sentence changed to banishment, at the intercession of the Earl of Huntly and Lord Hamilton. His accuser was Sir William Stewart, now about to proceed on the French embassy; and in his *dittay*, or indictment, which has been preserved, were contained various points of treason.[1] But his most flagrant offence, which was completely proved, was the base betrayal of his trust in his recent negotiation in England, where he secretly recommended the death, instead of pleading for the life, of the Scottish queen. At first, with his wonted effrontery, he attempted to brazen out the matter and overawe his enemies; but in the end he pleaded guilty; and, as abject as he had been insolent, threw himself on the king's mercy. None lamented his disgrace; for, although still young in years, Gray was old in falsehood and crime. Brilliant, fascinating, highly educated, and universally reputed the handsomest man of his time, he had used all these advantages for the most profligate ends; and his life, which to the surprise of many was now spared, had been little less than a tissue of treachery. He retired to France; and although, after some years, he was again permitted to return to Scotland, he never recovered the commanding station from which he fell.[2]

James had now attained majority, and important subjects began to occupy his mind. Amid much that was frivolous and volatile, this young prince sometimes evinced a sagacity in detecting abuses, and a vigour in devising plans for the amelioration of his kingdom, which surprised even those who knew him best. To reconcile his nobility, and extinguish those fierce and sanguinary family feuds which so frequently defied the laws and tore the kingdom in pieces; to arrange the affairs of the Kirk, provide for its ministers, and establish a certain form of ecclesiastical polity; to escape from the pressure of an enormous debt by recovering the crown lands, which had been greatly dilapidated during his minority; and to take some decisive steps on the subject of his marriage: these were the chief points which now pressed themselves upon his attention, and to which he directed the labours of his principal minister, the Secretary Maitland. But difficulties encountered him at every step. Outwardly, indeed, the king's desire for a reconciliation amongst the nobles was accomplished; and at the conclusion of the parliament held in the capital,[3] the principal street exhibited a singular spectacle. A table was spread at the cross, where a banquet was prepared by the magistrates; and a long line of nobles, who had been previously reconciled and feasted by the king in the palace at Holyrood, was seen to emerge from its massive gateway, and walk in peaceful procession up the principal street of the city. Bothwell and Angus, Hume and Fleming, Glammis and Crawford, with many other fierce opponents who had been compelled by their sovereign's threats or entreaties to an unwilling embrace, marched hand in hand to take their seats at the board of concord, where they drank to each other amid the thunder of the castle guns, and the songs and shouts of the citizens. It was an imposing ceremony, but really an idle and hollow farce. The deep wounds of feudal hatred, and the sacred duty of feudal revenge, were not so easily cured or forgotten; and many of the hands now locked in each other were quivering with a desire to find occupation rather in grappling the throat than pledging the health of their brother. Before the year concluded, all accordingly was nearly as bad as before.

There was one point, however, on which all seemed agreed—a desire to attack England and avenge the death of Mary. So deep was this feeling, that Thirlstane, now raised to the high office of chancellor, in closing

[1] Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. i. part iii. p. 157. Historie of James the Sext, p. 227. Spottiswood, p. 363.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Woddrington to Walsingham, 29th April 1587. Ibid., Carvyle to Walsingham, May 12, 1587.

[3] Historie of James the Sext, p. 229.

the parliament, made a stirring appeal to the assembled estates; and such was the impression of his eloquence, that the nobles, in a transport of pity and enthusiasm, threw themselves upon their knees before the king, and, amid the clang of their weapons and imprecations against Elizabeth, took a vow that they would hazard their lives and fortunes in the quarrel.[1]

These indications encouraged Huntly and the potent faction of the Catholic lords to a renewal, or rather more active continuance, of their intrigues with Spain and the Low Countries. Messengers were despatched thither, (not without the connivance of James,) who held out hopes to Philip of Scottish assistance in his great enterprise against England.[2] Various Jesuits and seminary priests in disguise (of whom Gordon and Drury were the most active) glided through Northumberland into Scotland, proceeded to the late convention at Edinburgh, and from thence to Aberdeen, where they continued their efforts, in conjunction with their foreign brethren, for the re-establishment of the Catholic faith and the dethronement of Elizabeth.[3] Apparently all this was encouraged by the Scottish king. It is, indeed, sometimes exceedingly difficult to get at the real sentiments of a prince who prided himself upon his dissimulation; but, either from policy or necessity, he was soon so utterly estranged from England, and so completely surrounded by the Spanish faction, that Elizabeth began to be in serious alarm.[4]

That great princess was at this moment surrounded by dangers of no ordinary magnitude. Philip the Second of Spain was collecting against her that mighty armament, which was idly deemed to be invincible. The ports of Spain and Flanders rang with the din of arms and the bustle and confusion of military preparation. The queen had been persuaded by Burghley and her chief councillors, that the execution of the Queen of Scots would prove a deathblow to the Catholic party, extricate her from all her difficulties, and confer upon her life and crown a security to which she had for many years been a stranger. But she was miserably disappointed. The accounts of the death of Mary were received by nearly the whole of Christendom with one loud burst of astonishment and indignation. No sovereign had enforced more rigidly than Elizabeth the dogma of the inviolability and divine right of princes, and their responsibility to God alone. The doctrine was generally received and, acted upon by her royal allies; and they now arraigned her as an apostate from her own principles, and an open despiser of all that was holy, just, and true. Mary's servants and household were many of them foreigners; and, returning to their homes, spread over the continent the touching story of her death. The hypocritical pretences of the Queen of England, by which she had endeavoured to shield herself from the odium of the execution, were generally discredited. It was said that, for the gratification of her own private revenge, she had not scrupled to stain her hands with the blood of an innocent queen; and that, to escape the infamy of the fact, she had meanly and falsely thrown the blame upon an innocent councillor. The press teemed throughout Catholic Europe with innumerable publications: histories, poems, pamphlets, and funeral orations, were circulated in every quarter on the alleged martyrdom of the Scottish queen, and the execrable guilt of her by whom she had been murdered. The whole course of Elizabeth's public and private life was dissected, attacked, and exaggerated; and she was held up to the detestation of the world as the true daughter and inheretrix of all the wickedness, cruelty, irreligion, tyranny, and lust of her father, Henry the

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Carvyle to Walsingham, August 3, 1587.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Car to Walsingham, September 11, 1587. Also ibid., B.C., Woddrington to Walsingham, April 29, 1587.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Collingwood to Walsingham, May 21, 1587.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Lord Hunsdon to Burghley, November 14, 1587.

Eighth. The effect of all this, and the impression it made upon the Catholic mind throughout Christendom, was great; and when Philip began his mighty preparations against England, the projected invasion of that country partook of something like the sanctity of a crusade.

Surrounded by such complicated difficulties, it was not without alarm that Elizabeth heard of the estrangement of the Scottish king, and the bold proceedings of her enemies the Catholic lords. Confident of the assistance of Spain, with whose vast preparations they were well acquainted, they hoped to revolutionise Scotland, get possession of the king's person, destroy his Protestant advisers, and re-establish the Catholic religion.[1] It was one principal branch of their plan to produce a diversion against England in Ireland and the Western Isles, which should take place at the moment of the invasion by the Armada. For the accomplishment of these great designs, Lord Maxwell, a leading and powerful Catholic lord, was on the continent in communication with Spain and Rome; Archibald Douglas was suspected to be seconding their efforts in England, and the disgraced Master of Gray in France; whilst Sir William Stewart, the brother of the once-powerful Arran, was busy at the head-quarters of the Prince of Parma.[2] In Scotland, Huntly, the great leader of the Catholic lords, with Lord Claud Hamilton, Mar, Angus, and Bothwell, were prepared, on the briefest warning, to assemble a force which the king, in his present circumstances of poverty and desertion, could not control. As was usual in Scotland, schemes of private assassination were mixed up with plots against the government: not only the Chancellor Maitland but the king himself considered their lives in danger;[3] and James, in self-defence, was compelled to dissemble, and to aim at a neutrality which promised a temporary security.[4] But throughout all this the real sentiments of the monarch experienced no alteration. He continued firm in his opposition to Spain, true to the Reformed religion, and ready to league with England the moment Elizabeth, throwing off her parsimony, shewed a sincere determination to assist him with money and troops. This the imminent dangers with which she was surrounded at length compelled her to do; and Lord Hunsdon, her cousin, who had recently gained an intimate knowledge of the intrigues of France by robbing the French ambassador, Courcelles, of his despatches, was selected to open a communication with the King of Scots. But at this moment a circumstance, apparently slight, had nearly overturned all. Jane Kennedy, the daughter of a noble house, who had attended Mary in her last hours, suddenly arrived from France, obtained a private audience of the king, was closeted with him for two hours, and gave so touching an account of the tragedy at Fotheringay, that James refused to be comforted; and denouncing vengeance, broke off the conferences with England. But these feelings were evanescent: the violence of the northern earls, the fear of losing Elizabeth and cutting himself out of the succession, restored him to his calmer mood; and he despatched the Laird of Carmichael to meet Hunsdon on the Borders at Hutton Hall.[5] All, however, had to be transacted with the utmost secrecy; and nothing could be more alarming than the picture of the kingdom drawn by the English diplomatist. Huntly and the Catholics, he said, were almost in open rebellion, earnestly pressing Philip and the Duke of Parma to attack England through

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, ‡‡ to Walsingham, 1st January 1587-8.

[2] MS., State-paper Office, January 1587-8. Occurrences out of Scotland.

[3] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula D, fol. Hunsdon to Burghley, 25th November 1587. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., same to same, 14th December 1587; and ibid., same to same, 27th December 1587.

[4] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula D, fol. Hunsdon to Burghley, 25th November 1587. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., same to same, 14th December 1587; and ibid., same to same, 27th December 1587.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Hunsdon to Burghley, 23d January 1587-8. Also ibid., same to same, 17th January 1587-8.

Scotland; and offering, the moment the Spaniards made their descent, to join them with a body of troops which should overwhelm Elizabeth.[1] Against this there was little to oppose: for the Scottish king and the Kirk were on bad terms; and the Chancellor Maitland, the only man of statesmanlike views, although in heart a Protestant and a friend to England, lived in hourly dread of assassination by Bothwell or some of his desperate associates.[2] Under such trying circumstances, it says something for the King of Scots that he resisted the high offers made to him at this crisis by foreign princes, declared himself the determined opponent of Spain, resolved to support the reformed opinions, and co-operated cordially with the Queen of England. He assured Elizabeth that she could not detest more deeply than himself the plots of the Papists; that none of the messengers of Antichrist, their common enemy, should be encouraged; and that his single reason for suspending their usual loving intelligence, was a feeling that she had failed to vindicate herself from the guilt of his mother's blood. To prove his sincerity against the Catholics, he summoned his forces, attacked the castle of Lochmaben, belonging to Lord Maxwell, who had now assumed the title of Morton, and, reinforced by an English battering-train, destroyed the castle, and took prisoner its captain, David Maxwell, whom he hanged with six of his men.[3] This spirit and severity enchanted Elizabeth; and she forthwith despatched Mr William Ashby to the Scottish court with her thanks and congratulations. But the ambassador promised far more than the queen had the least intention of performing. His royal mistress, he said, was ready to settle a duchy on her good brother, with a yearly pension of five thousand pounds. She would immediately raise for him a bodyguard of fifty Scottish gentlemen; and, to meet the danger of a revolt by the Popish lords on the approach of the Armada, she would levy a corps of a hundred horse and a hundred infantry to act upon the Borders.[4] With these high offers James immediately closed; and Walsingham, for whose piercing glance and universal intelligence nothing was too minute or remote, having discovered that Thomas Fowler, an attached friend of the house of Lennox, and a favourite of the Scottish king, was about to proceed on some private personal affairs to Edinburgh, contrived, through his means, to open a secret correspondence with James, and Maitland his chief minister, which enabled them to traverse and overthrow the designs of Huntly and the Spanish faction.[5] All this was of the utmost importance to Elizabeth. Ireland was saved from any invasion by the Islesmen; the Borders between England and Scotland were kept quiet; no Scottish auxiliaries were permitted to pass over to the service of her enemies; and she was enabled to concentrate her whole naval and military energies to meet the great crisis of her fate, the meditated invasion of the Armada. This she did, accordingly, in the noblest and most effective manner: and the result is familiar to all, in the utter discomfiture and dispersion of that mighty armament.

Not long after this occurred the assassination of the Duke of Guise and his brother the Cardinal of Lorraine, which removed two of her most powerful and talented opponents: so that, although the clouds still lowered, the imminency of the danger on the side of Spain and France had passed.

James now naturally looked for the performance of her promises; but he was cruelly disappointed. With the cessation of alarm, Elizabeth's deep-

[1] MS., 1588-9, State-paper Office. Intercepted letters of Huntly, Morton, and Lord Claud Hamilton, in the name of the Catholic gentlemen of Scotland, to the King of Spain. This is a decipher by the noted Phelipps.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Hunsdon to Burghley, 31st March 1588.

[3] Historie of James the Sext, p. 236.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, William Ashby to Lord Burghley, 6th August 1588.

[5] Ibid., Ashby to Walsingham, 13th November 1588. Also ibid., Fowler to Walsingham, 18th December 1588.

rooted habits of parsimony revived: the promised duchy with its princely revenue, the annual pension, the intended body-guard, the English auxiliaries to act upon the Borders, melted away and were no more heard of. Ashby, the ambassador, it was alleged, had much exceeded his instructions; and the king, in great wrath, complained that he had been dandled and duped like a boy.[1] These irritated feelings were encouraged by the Spanish faction. Many urged the king to seek revenge. Bothwell, ever anxious for broils, boasted that, without charging his master a farthing, he would bleed Elizabeth's exchequer at the rate of two hundred thousand crowns a year, or lay the country waste to the gates of Newcastle. The more moderate party hardly dared to advise; and the Chancellor Maitland, hitherto the firm friend of England, found himself compelled to unite with Huntly. The character of the young prince, and the dangerous and unsettled state of Scotland at this time, were strikingly described by Fowler in one of his letters to Walsingham. He found James, he said, a virtuous prince, stained by no vice, and singularly acute in the discussion of all matters of state, but indolent and careless; and so utterly profuse, that he gave to every suitor, even to vain youths and proud fools, whatever they desired. He did not scruple to throw away, in this manner, even the lands of his crown; and so reckless was he of wealth, that in Fowler's opinion, if he were to get a million from England, it would all go the same way. His pleasures were hunting, of which he was passionately fond; and playing at the *mawe*, an English game of chance, in which he piqued himself on excelling. In his dress he was slovenly, and his court and household were shabby and unkingly; but he sat often in council, was punctual in his religious duties, not missing the sermons thrice a week; and his manners betrayed no haughtiness or pride. It was evident to Fowler that he detested the rude and ferocious bearing of his great nobles, who were content to obey him in trifles, but in all serious matters, touching life or justice, took the law into their own hands, and openly defied him. Upon this subject Fowler's expressions were remarkable. When it came to the execution of justice, it was evident, he said, his subjects feared him not, whilst he was terrified to deal with so many at once, looking tremblingly to the fate of his ancestors, of whom such as attempted to execute justice with severity, were uniformly put to death by their nobles.[2] Often had the king assured the intimate friend who wrote these letters, that it was misery to be constrained to live amid the wickedness of his barons, and that they made his existence a burden to him. Nor could he look for redress to his council. Even the wisest and greatest amongst them, not excepting the Chancellor Maitland, were infinitely more occupied in private quarrels and family feuds than with the public business of the state; and, to increase their individual power, were content to flatter the king in the basest manner, and become suitors at court for everything ungodly and unreasonable. Well might Walsingham exclaim, in answer to this sad, dark picture of regal weakness and feudal misrule, "God send that young prince, being of himself every way well-inclined, good, wise, and faithful counsellors, that may carry him in a constant course for the upholding of religion and the establishing of justice in that realm."[3] As a cure for this miserable condition, the English secretary recommended a Court of Star-chamber, and a change of councillors from the great nobles to the barons and burgesses. But neither measure was practicable; and Maitland, at this moment James's chief adviser,

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, 29th December 1588.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, 18th December 1588. Also ibid., Fowler to Walsingham, 29th December 1588.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, original draft, Walsingham to Fowler, 22d December 1588.

assured Fowler that the death of the Guises, instead of being attended with any favourable result in strengthening the English party in Scotland, would have an opposite effect. "Your queen," said he, "thinks that she has lost in Guise a great enemy, and my master a great friend. Be assured it is not so. For a long time the king hath had no dealings with the Guise: he loved him not; nor is he sorry but rather glad that he is gone. But, mark me, this will make the King of Spain seek my master, and esteem him more than before: for by the Duke of Guise that prince thought to have had all France at his devotion, except the Protestants; to have subdued even them ere long, and to have been so strong as to have had his revenge on England, without our help here; but now Scotland is his only card to play against England, and that you will see ere long."[1]

These predictions were soon fully verified. The Popish earls, led by Huntly and Errol, entered into a more active and deep-laid correspondence with Spain and Rome. Large sums of money were remitted to them from Philip and the Pope; and letters were intercepted by Burghley, which proved, in the clearest manner, an intended rebellion. They were seized on the person of a Scotchman, who was detected carrying them to the Prince of Parma; and expressed, on the part of Huntly, Morton, Errol, and the rest of the Catholic noblemen and gentry of Scotland, their infinite regret at the discomfiture of the Armada, and their sorrow that the fleet had passed so near their coast without visiting them, when they were able to have raised a force such as could not have been resisted. They assured the Spanish king, that the outlay of a single Galeas in Scotland would have gone further than ten on the broad seas; and that six thousand Spaniards, once landed there, would be joined by an infinite multitude of Scotsmen animated with the bitterest hatred to England, and who would serve him as faithfully as his own subjects. Huntly at the same time assured Parma, that his late confession, and his signature to the Protestant Articles, had been extorted from him against his conscience; but that in spite of all this he continued a true Catholic, and by this pretended change had acquired a greater power over the young king. In the same letters Errol professed the utmost devotion to the Catholic faith, congratulating himself on having been called from darkness to light; and Bruce informed Parma of the seasonable arrival of Chisholm, their agent, with the large sum intrusted to him, and of their having secured the Earl of Bothwell, who, though still a Protestant, had been bribed to embrace their party.

Copies of these letters were instantly sent down to James, who at first disbelieved the whole story, and dealt so leniently with the principal conspirators, that the plot, instead of being crushed in its first growth, spread its ramifications throughout the country, especially the northern counties, and grew more dangerous than before. Huntly was, indeed, imprisoned; but his confinement was a mere farce. The king visited him in his chamber and dined there; permitted his wife and servants to communicate freely with him; wrote him an affectionate remonstrance, and even kissed and caressed him.[2] This could end only one way. The captive, after a brief imprisonment, during which he made the most solemn asseverations of his innocence, was restored by the too credulous monarch to his former authority, and basely abused the royal forgiveness by seducing the fierce and potent Earl of Bothwell from his allegiance, and breaking into open rebellion.

This insurrection at first assumed the most formidable appearance: the whole of Scotland north of Aberdeen was on the eve of revolt; and Bothwell threatened, that if James ven-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, January 4, 1588-9.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ashby to Burghley, Edinburgh, March 10, 1588-9. Also ibid., same to same, March 14, 1588-9.

tured to take arms against the remoter insurgents, he would ravage the south in his absence and compel him to draw homewards. But this bravado, instead of intimidating, effectually roused the king, who, for the first and almost the last time in his life, exhibited a military spirit worthy of his ancestors. An army was instantly assembled; a conspiracy for the seizure of James and his chief minister, Maitland the chancellor, promptly discovered and defeated.[1] The Protestant nobles, led by the young Duke of Lennox and the chancellor, rallied in great strength; the Earl of Mar, the three lords warden, Hume, Cessford, and Carmichael, the Earls of Morton, Angus, Marshal, Athole, and the Master of Glammis, gathered and concentrated their forces beyond the Forth; and the monarch, who was described by Ashby the English ambassador, as "*fellon crabbed*," pushed on, at the head of his troops, to St Johnston, loudly declaring his resolution to wreck his rebels, and destroy them with fire and sword.[2]

This vigour and resolution had the best effect. The formidable stories of the mighty strength and preparations of the Catholic earls were found false and ridiculous,—their troops melted away. Bothwell's force, which was to effect such wonders, soon shrunk to thirty horse; and James, advancing by Dundee and Brechin, carried everything before him, and compelled the rebels to evacuate Aberdeen, the centre of their strength. It had been expected that the enemy would here give battle, but their courage failed them. Crawford secretly fled; others openly deserted; and the king, who had shewn unusual hardihood, and watched two nights in his arms, was disappointed of an opportunity to win his spurs. But the expedition was completely successful; Huntly was driven from Aberdeen to Strathbogie, his own country, where he surrendered himself prisoner, and was carried in triumph by the king to Edinburgh. Slaines, the principal castle of Errol, was taken and garrisoned; the Lairds of Frendraught, Grant and Mackintosh, the powerful clans of the Drummonds and the Forbeses, with many others who had been seduced from their allegiance by the Catholic faction, submitted themselves; and James, in high spirits and exultation, returned to his capital with the resolution of proceeding instantly against Bothwell. But this fierce chief, who was now crest-fallen and in no state to make resistance, threw himself on his knees before the king in the chancellor's garden, and was sent prisoner to Holyrood.[3]

A convention of the nobility was now held at Edinburgh; and the rebel earls, Huntly and Crawford, having been brought to trial and convicted of high treason, escaped with imprisonment, contrary to the remonstrances of the leaders of the Kirk, who clamoured for the death of idolaters. Their confession, however, had softened the king; and their high connexions rendered it dangerous to use extremities. Bothwell also was brought to trial; but, after his usual fierce fashion, declared his innocence; reviled and accused the chancellor, and stood on his defence. The circumstance of his being in arms against the government, and his cordial co-operation with the northern rebellion, was, indeed, notorious to all; but the dread of his power and revenge intimidated the court. The trial was prolonged till midnight; and it required the presence and remonstrances of the king to procure a conviction. He was then shut up in Tantallon;[4] but was enlarged, after a few months, on payment of a heavy fine to the crown.[5]

This unusual exertion of James in destroying the designs of Huntly and the Catholics, was followed by a fit

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ashby to Burghley, April 8, 1589.
[2] Ibid., Fowler to Burghley, April 9, 1589.
[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ashby to Walsingham, May 12, 1589.
[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ashby to Walsingham, May 25, 1589. Ibid., Fowler to Walsingham, May 26, 1589.
[5] Ibid., Ashby to Walsingham, August 26, 1589.

of extraordinary activity on another subject: his marriage with Denmark. At the time of the first proposal of a matrimonial alliance with this kingdom, Arran was in power, and had engaged to Elizabeth that his royal master should continue single for three years. Accordingly, on the arrival of the Danish ambassadors, they found themselves treated with such irritating coldness and neglect, that it required much management on the part of Sir James Melvil to prevent an open rupture, and convince them that the affront proceeded not from the young king but his haughty minister.[1] His endeavours, however, succeeded; and although the Danish monarch, in some disgust, disposed of his eldest daughter, the princess-royal, the intended bride of James, to the Duke of Brunswick, he afterwards declared his willingness to bestow her sister, the Princess Anne, upon the Scottish king. The intrigues of England, however, continued. Elizabeth, who had gained to her interest the Chancellor Maitland, recommended the Princess of Navarre; and the celebrated poet Du Bartas visited Scotland on a secret mission to propose the match. This preference probably proceeded from a suspicion that the Princess Anne was not sound in her attachment to the Protestant opinions, which afterwards turned out to be well founded; but James utterly disrelished the dictation of the queen and the boldness of his council. It was time, he felt, that in so weighty a matter as his marriage, he should vindicate his liberty of choice and follow his own judgment: he had, besides, heard a report that the Princess of Navarre was old and crooked; and although his great nobles affected the alliance with France, the bulk of his people, the burgh towns and the merchants, were all keen for Denmark.[2] This decided the young king; and he now despatched the earl marshal, with a noble suite, to proceed to Copenhagen and conclude the match.

On his arrival, the Scottish ambassador found that, if cold or slow at first, the Danish court were hot enough (to use Ashby's expression to Walsingham) as soon as there was a serious proposal made. All was soon arranged, and the utmost bustle prevailed. In some amusing contemporary letters, the queen-mother is described as the soul and centre of the whole preparations—perpetually buying silks, or cheapening jewellery, or urging on a corps of five hundred tailors, who sat daily stitching and getting up the most princely apparel. Women, guards, pages, lackeys, all, from the highest to the lowest, who were to compose the suite of the bride, received orders to hold themselves in readiness. A fleet of twelve sail, with brass ordnance, was fitted out to transport her; and it was reported that she was likely to land in Scotland before James's wedding hose were ready, or a house furnished to receive her.[3] But these anticipations proved fallacious; and the king, who had worked up his usually phlegmatic temper to an extraordinary pitch of chivalrous admiration, was kept for some weeks in an agony of suspense by contrary winds and contrary counsels. This did not prevent him, however, from forwarding to his ambassadors a gentle remonstrance touching the smallness of the "tocher," or dowery; but Denmark refused to add a farthing to it; and the monarch, affecting the utmost anxiety for the young princess, who, he had persuaded himself, was utterly in despair and love-sick at the delay, urged her instant departure.[4] At length she sailed; but the squadron encountered a tremendous storm, which shattered and dispersed the ships, and compelled them to return to Norway in so leaky and disabled a condition, that every hope of resuming their voyage for that season was aban-

[1] Melvil's Memoirs, Bannatyne edition, p. 337.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ashby to Walsingham, 22d July 1589. Melvil's Memoirs, pp. 363, 364.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ashby to Walsingham, 22d July 1589. Fowler to Walsingham, 5th August 1589.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, August 5, 1589.

doned.[5] During all this period of suspense, the young king's romantic agitation continued. He was a true lover, as Ashby described him to Walsingham in a letter from the court at Holyrood, thinking every day a year till he saw his love and joy approach; at one time, flying to God, and commanding prayers and fasting for her safe arrival; at another, falling upon the Scottish witches, to whose unhallowed rites and incantations he ascribed the tempests which delayed her. Nor were these pretended agonies: for when at last the news arrived of her danger and escape, he suddenly adopted the idea of proceeding in person to Norway, and determined (to use the poetic phraseology of Ashby to Queen Elizabeth) "to commit himself and his hopes, Leander like, to the waves of the ocean, all for his beloved Hero's sake."[2]

This resolution he carried into effect on the 22d of October; embarking at Leith, accompanied by the Chancellor Maitland, who had been forced to wave his repugnance to the match; by his favourite minister and chaplain Mr David Lindsay, and a select train of his nobility. On the day after his departure, a declaration of the reasons which had prompted so unusual a step was delivered to the privy-council, and afterwards made public. It was written wholly in the king's hand, and is ludicrously characteristic of the monarch. We learn from his own lips that it had been very generally asserted by his loving subjects, that their sovereign was a "barren stock," indisposed to marriage, and careless of having children to succeed him in the throne. His mind, too, had been attacked in most unmannerly terms: it was insinuated that the chancellor "led him by the nose," as if he were an unreasonable creature, a mere child in intellect and resolution, or an "impudent ass that could do nothing of himself." To confute the first slander, he had determined to seek his queen forthwith, and marry her as speedily as the winds and waves would permit. To give the lie to the second aspersion, he assured his people, on the honour of a prince, that he alone, unknown to chancellor or council, had conceived the first idea of this winter voyage; that his resolution was taken in the solitude of his chamber at Craigmillar; and that, till the preparations were concluded, and he was ready to step on board, the purpose was shut up in his own bosom. "Let no man, therefore," he concluded, "grudge at this proceeding, but conform to the directions I have left."[3]

These directions, notwithstanding the undignified singularity of the paper which accompanied them, were marked by prudence and good sense. The chief authority, during the royal absence, was committed to the Duke of Lennox, who was made president of the privy-council. Bothwell, whose turbulent disposition and power upon the Borders rendered it dangerous for him to be disobliged, was conciliated by being placed next in rank and authority to Lennox. The other councillors were, the treasurer, comptroller, the lord privy-seal, the captain of the castle of Edinburgh, with the lord advocate and clerk-register. A committee of noblemen was ordered to attend "in their courses," at Edinburgh, for fifteen days; the Earls of Angus and Athole, with Lords Fleming and Innermeith, to begin; and the next course to be kept by the Earls of Mar and Morton, with Lords Seton and Yester. The chief military power, as lord-lieutenant, was intrusted to Lord Hamilton, to be assisted in any emergency by Lords Boyd, Herries, Maxwell, Home, Cessford, and other principal barons within the marches. All conventions of the nobles were prohibited during the king's absence; and the ministers and preachers enjoined to exhort the people to obedience, and to commend their sovereign and his journey in their prayers to God.[4]

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ashby to Walsingham, 5th, 24th September 1589. Also ibid., same to same, 2d October 1589. Ibid., same to same, 10th October 1589. Ibid., same to Queen Elizabeth, 23d October 1589.

[2] Spottiswood, pp. 377, 378.

[3] Spottiswood, pp. 377-379.

[4] Ibid., p. 379.

Having given these directions, the king set sail; and his insulated fit of love and chivalry met with its reward. After an initiatory gale, just sufficient to try the royal courage, the squadron reached Upsal on the fifth day, and James rode to the palace, where his intended bride awaited him; hurried, "booted and spurred," into her presence; and, in the rude fashion of Scotland, would have kissed her, had he not been repulsed by the offended maidenhood of Denmark. But she was soon appeased: explanations followed; the manners of the royal bridegroom's land were comprehended; and "after a few words privily spoken between his majesty and her, there passed," we are told by a homely chronicler of the day, "familiarity and kisses."[1]

The marriage took place (November 23) in the church at Upsal: the ceremony being performed by the king's favourite minister, Mr David Lindsay. Much rejoicing and banqueting, as usual, succeeded; and it appears to have required little argument in the queen-mother to persuade her new son-in-law to eschew the dangers of a winter voyage, and convert his intended visit of twenty days into a residence of nearly six months in Denmark. This interval was passed by the king to his entire satisfaction, the time being divided between in-door revelries and pageants; out-door sports; discussions on astronomy with Tycho Brahe, whom he visited at Uranibourg; disputes with the learned Hemingius, on predestination and other points in divinity; and consultations with the Chancellor Maitland, regarding the safest method of curbing the overgrown power of his nobles, and vindicating, on his return, the authority of the crown. In the spring he determined on his voyage home; and carrying his youthful queen along with him, accompanied by a splendid retinue of Danish nobles and ladies,[2] arrived at Leith on the 1st of May 1590. The royal pair were received, on disembarking, by the Duke of Lennox, Lord Hamilton, the Earl of Bothwell, and a crowd of his nobility. A Latin oration of welcome was followed by a sermon of Mr Patrick Galloway; and after divine service, the king, mounting his horse, followed by his youthful bride in her chariot, drawn by eight horses gorgeously caparisoned, proceeded to the palace of Holyrood. She was encircled by a galaxy of Danish and Scottish beauty, and attended by all the chivalry of her new dominions.

Her coronation followed not long after, performed on a scale of unusual magnificence, and only clouded by a dispute between the king and the Kirk, on the subject of anointing; a ceremony represented on the side of the Puritans as Jewish, Papal, and abominably superstitious: on the other, as Christian, holy, and Catholic. The royal arguments, however, were enforced by a threat that one of the bishops should be sent for. The dread of this worse profanation procured the admission of the lesser: the ceremony was allowed to proceed according to the king's wishes; and, to use the *naïve* expression of a contemporary, "the Countess of Mar, having taken the queen's right arm, and opened the *craigs* of her gown, Mr Robert Bruce immediately poured forth upon those parts of her breast and arm of quhilk the clothes were removed, a bonny quantity of oil."[3]

The coronation was followed by the queen's triumphal entry into her new capital; a ceremony conducted by the worthy merchants and burgesses on a scale of splendour which argued increasing wealth and success in commercial enterprise. But the particulars, though curiously illustrative of manners, would fatigue by their complexity. Latin addresses were, as usual in this age, the great staple of compliment; and when the Danish princess entered the gates, she was greeted in

[1] Moyse's Memoirs, Bannatyne edition, p. 81.

[2] Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xvi. pp. 51-60.

[3] The Coronation of the Quenis Majestie, p. 53. One of the curious tracts, reprinted by Mr Gibson-Craig in his interesting volume presented to the Bannatyne Club, entitled, "Papers Relative to the Marriage of James the Sixth of Scotland."

a classical panegyric by "Master John Russell, appointed thereto by the township;" whilst the son of the orator, "little Master John Russell," who had been artificially and wonderfully shut up in a gilded globe stuck upon the top of the gate, fluttered down in the dress of an angel, and delivered to her majesty the keys of the city in silver.[3]

CHAPTER VII.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1590—1593.

THE period which James passed in Denmark was one of unusual and extraordinary tranquillity in Scotland. Previous to his departure, the king had exerted himself to conciliate Elizabeth; and many circumstances in his conduct had concurred to please this princess. His cordial co-operation against the Spanish king; the readiness with which he had furnished her with a body of auxiliaries, commanded by the Laird of Wemyss; his spirit and success in putting down the rebellion of the Catholic earls, and his sending out of his dominions a body of Spanish soldiers and mariners, whose vessels (part of the once formidable Armada) had been wrecked and stranded on the northern shores of Scotland:[1] all this had been exceedingly agreeable to the Queen of England; and she repaid it by preserving the most friendly relations during the absence of the king. Nor was the peace of the country, in this brief and happy interval, broken by the usual sanguinary baronial feuds; although, as the result fully shewed, they were silenced, not eradicated. Huntly, Errol, Crawford, Maxwell, and the great body of the Roman Catholic party, had too recently experienced the weight of the royal vengeance to think of active hostility for some time; and the judicious division of power between the Duke of Lennox, Lord Hamilton, and the Earl of Bothwell, balanced by the authority committed to Angus and Athole, Mar and Morton, with other great barons, produced the best effects, and put all upon their honour and good conduct. The Kirk, too, was in a state of tranquillity—rejoicing in the recent detection and discomfiture of Roman Catholic intrigue, looking forward in calm exultation to the utter extermination of prelatical principles, and anticipating no distant triumph to what it believed to be the truth.

On the return of the king, therefore, all at first appeared tranquil; but it needed no deep discernment to detect the existence of many latent causes of disturbance. The great struggle between the principles of the Reformation and the ancient faith was lulled only, not concluded.[3] The minor, but sometimes not less bitter contest between Prelacy and Presbyterianism, was merely suspended for a time. Amongst the nobles, the right of private war; the ties of manrent;

[1] "To the number of 660 men, of whom 400 were serviceable, and the rest sick, miserable wretches."—They were shipped from Leith, July 25, 1589. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ashby to Burghley, 28th July 1589. Also ibid., same to Walsingham, 22d July 1589.

[2] Papers Relative to the Marriage of James the Sixth, pp. 39, 40.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir R. Bowes to Burghley, 16th May 1590. The Roman Catholic faction were called the "Confederates of the Brig of Dee."

the abuses of baronial jurisdictions; the existence of blood-feuds, which often from trifling quarrels depopulated whole districts and counties; and in the isles, and remoter provinces of the north, the lawless and fierce habits of the petty chieftains and pirate adventurers, who assumed the state and independence of sea kings: all these circumstances combined to threaten the public tranquillity, and to convince the king that the sky so clear on his arrival might soon be black with its wonted tempests.

Amid these elements of political strife and nascent revolution, two men were to be seen evidently destined, from their power and political position, to take the chief lead in state affairs. Both were well aware of the easy and indolent temper of the king; both had resolved to engross to themselves the supreme power in the government: and for some years, the history of the country is little else than the conflicts of their intrigue and ambition. These were, Maitland of Thirlstane the chancellor, James's favourite and prime minister, who had accompanied his royal master to Denmark; and Francis Stewart, earl of Bothwell, the king's near relative, and, perhaps, the most daring, powerful, and unprincipled of all the higher nobles. Maitland, born of an ancient family, but only the second son of a simple knight, (the blind poet, Sir Richard Maitland of Lethington,) belonged to the body of the lesser barons; but he was connected with some of the greatest houses in the land. He had risen by his commanding talents to the highest legal office in the kingdom; and he was strong in the friendship of his prince, and the respect of the Kirk and the great body of the middle classes—the rich burghers, merchants, and artisans. During his absence in Denmark with his royal master, they had held many grave consultations on the broken, disjointed, and miserable state of his kingdom. The extreme poverty of the crown, the insolence and intolerable oppressions of the higher barons, who, strong in their hereditary power, dictated to the monarch on all the affairs of his government, thrust themselves uncalled for into his councils, attended or absented themselves from court at their pleasure, and derided alike the command of their prince or the decisions of the laws: all this was pointed out by the chancellor to the king, and the absolute necessity of some speedy and efficient reformation insisted on. It was time, he said, that the monarch, who was now in the prime of his years and vigour, allied by marriage to a powerful prince, the heir of a mighty kingdom, and able, from his position, to take a leading part in European politics, should no longer be bearded by every baron who chose to consider himself as a born councillor of the realm. It was time that those illegal coalitions of the nobles, whose object it had so often been to seize the king's person, and compel him into an approval of all their atrocious designs, should be broken up, and for the future rendered impossible. To effect this, the crown must strengthen itself in every possible way: it must support its judges and officers in the execution of their duty against baronial oppression and insolence; it must increase its revenues by a prudent economy and retrenchment of the superfluous offices in the royal household; it must save its escheats, its wardships, its fines, its rentals, and all the sources of its wealth, to form a fund for all emergencies, but especially for the support of a body of waged troops, who, by their constant readiness for service and superior discipline, might overawe the nobles and their vassals. To effect this would require some sacrifices on the part of the prince. Amongst these, a more rigid and practical attention to business, a correction of the mischievous habit of granting every petition without inquiry, and a resolution to hold himself more distant and dignified to his nobility, were absolutely necessary; but if ready to consent to these, it would not, he said, be difficult to effect a thorough reformation; and he, the chancellor, for his part, was ready to back the king

to the utmost of his power to accomplish it. To this end, he represented to James the wisdom of keeping up the present friendly relations with England, and the necessity of watching the motions of Huntly and the Roman Catholic party, who, though apparently subdued and silent, were still powerful in the kingdom, busy in their intrigues with Spain, and ready to seize any opportunity for a new effort.[1] Nor was there any reason why this large and powerful body of men should despair of success, but rather the contrary. Ample proof of this may be found in a remarkable paper in the hand of Lord Burghley, written shortly before James's arrival from Denmark, and drawn up apparently for his own guidance, which brings forward, in clear contrast, the comparative strength of the Catholic and Protestant parties in Scotland. From it we learn, that all the northern part of the kingdom, including the counties of Inverness, Caithness, Sutherland, and Aberdeen, with Moray, and the sheriffdoms of Buchan, of Angus, of Wigton, and of Nithsdale, were either wholly, or for the greater part, in the interest of the Roman Catholic party, commanded mostly by noblemen who secretly adhered to that faith, and directed in their movements by Jesuits and priests, who were concealed in various parts of the country, especially in Angus. On the other hand, the counties of Perth and Stirling, the populous shire of Fife, and the counties of Lanark, Dumbarton, and Renfrew, including the rich district of Clydesdale, were, with few exceptions, Protestant; whilst the counties of Ayr and Linlithgow were dubious, and could not be truly ranged either on one side or the other.[2] Are we to be surprised that, in a country thus divided, and with a prince so little able to adopt a firm and determined line of policy as James then was, the struggle between the two parties should long be kept up with increasing obstinacy and asperity? But it is necessary to leave these general remarks and resume our narrative.

In the end of May, the Danish commissioners and nobles, who had accompanied their young princess to Scotland, took leave of the Scottish monarch, and returned to Denmark. It had been arranged between James and his chief minister, Maitland, that no attempt at reformation should be made till these strangers had left the country; but scarcely had they embarked, when the king exhibited an unusual courage and activity, by making an effort to seize, with his own hand, the Laird of Niddry, a baron who had been guilty of a foul murder, and was protected by Bothwell. This energy, although unsuccessful at the moment, (for the culprit, receiving warning, escaped,) had a good effect in convincing the country that he was in earnest; and about the same time the strictest regulations as to audience were enforced at the palace. Of this an instance occurred soon after, which made some noise. Lord Hamilton, the first nobleman in the country, and heir-apparent to the throne, sought, as usual, to enter the king's presence-chamber, but was stopped at the door by Sandilands, one of the royal suite, who told him the king was quiet, and would see no one. "I was sent for," said Hamilton; "I am ready to serve my prince, and thought to have access freely as I was wont; but you may tell the king, that this new order will offend more than me." He then left the palace in a high fume, and would have ridden home had he not been better advised. James afterwards good humouredly appeased him; observing, that it ill became the heir-apparent to be angry with the *old laird*, meaning himself. Bowes however, who was at court, and told the anecdote to Burghley, observed, that such new restrictions gave deep offence in Scotland, and caused much murmuring with a proud nobility, long accustomed to have the freest access to their sovereign.[3]

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Sir R. Bowes to Lord Burghley, May 16, 1590.

[2] MS., State-paper Office. Names of the towns and noblemen in Scotland, and how they are affected. 1589.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, May 23, 1590, Bowes to Burghley.

Such discontent, however small in its beginning, soon spread widely; and unknown evils and reforms being generally magnified in anticipation, the king's intentions created an alarm, which shewed itself in a coalition between those who hitherto had been in constant and bitter collision—the Catholic faction, known by the name of the Confederates of the Brig of Dee, and the Protestant associates of the Enterprise at Stirling. The Earls of Huntly, Errol, Bothwell, and Montrose, began to league together; and James had at first resolved to attempt a stroke of state policy by committing them to ward, bringing them to trial for their former offences, and at once destroying so dangerous a combination. But the attempt was deemed too hazardous; and it was judged more prudent to temporise, and keep up the two factions, balancing the one against the other.[1]

A convention of the nobles was appointed to be held early in June, "The king," said Bowes to Burghley, alluding to his projected improvements, "according to his public promise in Edinburgh, and solemn protestations to some noblemen, ministers, and well-affected, is resolved to reform his house, council, and sessions, and to banish all Jesuits and Papists. He purposeth, further, to resume into his hands sundry of his own possessions now in the holding of others; to advance his revenues with some portions of ecclesiastical livings; and to draw to due obedience all persons attainted at horn, excommunicated, or otherwise disobedient. In the execution of which things," continued the ambassador, "he will find no little difficulty; for I have heard that many intend to seek to defeat and stay the king's course herein; and that sundry of the sessions will stand in law to hold their places, notwithstanding any charge to be given to avoid them."[2]

James, for some time, was active and serious in these reforms. His household was greatly reduced in its expenditure. After a general dismissal of officers, which occasioned many murmurs, the gentlemen personally attendant on royalty were cut down from thirty to four, with two pages; and the monarch drew up, in his own hand, some principal matters relative to domestic and foreign policy, upon which he required the immediate advice of his privy-council. They must consider, he said, the state of the strengths and munitions, and the necessary provision to be made for the defence of the kingdom, in case of foreign invasion; the treaties required to be entered into, for the preservation of foreign amity; the best measures to be adopted for the procuring secret foreign intelligence; the "griefs of the nobility and people, as well against the king as the government of his councillors; the necessity of a rigid investigation into the true state of the realm;" the "ettling"[3] and disposition of the nobility, and other persons of power and credit. They must discover who were well affected to the true religion; who carried away by the persuasion of Jesuits and Papists; what was the best medicine to cure diversities in religion, and heal the bloody wounds occasioned by feuds and family quarrels; what were the true causes of the decay of the rents of the crown; and lastly, they must point out the best method to enforce obedience to the acts of the last parliament, and declare what properly belonged to every office of the estate. Such were the grave and weighty matters which the king now brought before his council.[4]

But these were not all: the monarch had resolved to exert his utmost efforts to heal the wounds, not of Scotland only, but of Europe, by establishing a peace between England and Spain. To effect this, he despatched Colonel Stewart and Sir John Skene on a mission to the princes of Germany, to

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, May 23, 1590, Bowes to Burghley.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, May 31, 1590, Bowes to Burghley.

[3] The ettling, the aim; to ettle, to aim The aim and leading objects of the nobles.

[4] MS., State-paper Office, Heads for our Privy-Council, May 1590. Set down by the King of Scots.

persuade the Palsgrave, the Duke of Saxony, the Marquis of Brandenburg, and the rest of these potentates, of the absolute necessity of interfering between these two mighty powers; and to recommend them to send ambassadors to England, France, and Spain, who might remonstrate on the miserable consequences of the continuance of the war. If Spain were obstinate, a general league was to be concluded amongst the princes, for the preservation of "the common cause of true religion; and their ports were to be shut against Philip till he was reduced to reason."[1]

These great designs the king communicated to Elizabeth by Sir John Carmichael, whom he sent to the English court with a copy of the Instructions furnished to his German ambassadors; and as his exchequer was at this time utterly impoverished, he requested that princess to lend him sufficient to defray the expenses of their voyage; declaring his readiness, in return, to place upon his privy-council any nobleman whom she recommended, and to exert his utmost strength in crushing the Roman Catholic faction, who were renewing their intrigues with Spain.[2] The "band," or covenant, which united Huntly, Errol, and their associates, in their recent treasonable enterprise, had been traced to the hands of the Laird of Auchendown, and Maitland the chancellor insisted on its being produced; assuring Elizabeth, with whom he was then in great favour, that the association should be broken up or Huntly wrecked for ever.[3]

To confirm the monarch in such good purposes, the Queen of England sent him the Garter by the Earl of Worcester, who arrived in Edinburgh during the sitting of that convention from which such important reformations were to have proceeded. James accepted the queen's presents and letter in excellent part; congratulated himself on having so worthy a knight-companion as the French king, (Henry had just been chosen a knight of the order;) and held some merry talk with Worcester on the cause of the Scottish queen's invisibility, her majesty being then in the family way, and pretending it was only the tooth-ache.[4] But, on proceeding from these lighter subjects to speak of the intended reformations, it was evident, even to the superficial observation of a stranger like Worcester, that the course of improvements would be beset with difficulties. When reformation of justice was debated, the Lords of Session professed, indeed, the utmost readiness to amend all; and two of their number, Mr David Makgill and Mr John Graham, indulged very freely and bitterly in mutual accusations of bribery and corruption; but the rest pleaded their privilege, granted by act of parliament, to "try themselves." With regard to the Kirk, when its leaders insisted that every parish should be provided with a minister, and every minister with a stipend, no objection was made by the nobles to the proposal, in general; but "the possessors of the church lands declared their determination not to surrender any portion of their tacks and leases unless the remainder should be secured to them in fee-simple for ever."[5]

In the end, however, some points were gained, which pleased both James and the English queen, who now acted

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, June 4, 1590.

[2] Ibid., June 9, 1590.

[3] Ibid., June 4, 1590. It was about this time that Bowes placed in James's hands a letter writ by her majesty's own hand. It alluded to his great design for the re-establishment of peace, and was more free from the involution and pedantry which mark her private letters than many of her epistles. It assured him that she was happy to find him so grateful a king; that she highly approved of his purpose; and that nothing could equal the careful thoughts for him and his realm which had occupied her since his peregrination. "And so," said she, "I leave scribbling, but never end to love you and assist you with my friendship, care, and prayer to the living God to send you all prosperous success, and His Holy Spirit for guide."*

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Earl of Worcester to Burghley, Edinburgh, June 15, 1590.

[5] Ibid.

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Royal letters, Scotland. Elizabeth to James.

together with much cordiality. The choice of the king's secret council was left to his own will, and Elizabeth knew she would be chiefly consulted. The monarch, strengthened by the approval of the wisest sort, led by the chancellor, held the Roman Catholic faction in awe; restrained the insolence of Bothwell; insisted on the appearance and delivery of all "at the horn" who had hitherto defied the law; took steps for the speedy and amicable settlement of all Border causes; adopted measures to amend the coin, which had been much debased; and, whilst he continued his favour towards the Kirk, did not scruple to silence some of the wilder sort of the brethren, who in their public sermons had attacked the Queen of England for her recent severity to the English Puritans. On this last subject, the excesses of the Puritans, Elizabeth felt keenly; and her far-sighted glance had already detected the dangers of a sect then only in their infancy, but professing principles which she deemed inconsistent with the safety of any well-governed state. Worcester had received pointed instructions in the matter;[1] and the queen herself, when she dismissed Sir John Carmichael the Scottish ambassador, enforced her wishes in a private letter to James, which is too characteristic to be omitted. It is as follows:—"Greater promises, more affection, and grants of more acknowledgings of received good turns, my dear brother, none can better remember than this gentleman, by your charge, hath made me understand; whereby I think all my endeavours well recompensed, that see them so well acknowledged; and do trust that my counsels, if they so much content you, will serve for memorials to turn your actions to serve the turn of your safe government, and make the lookers-on honour your worth, and reverence such a ruler.

"And lest fair semblances, that easily may beguile, do not breed your ignorance of such persons as either pretend religion or dissemble devotion, let me warn you that there is risen, both in your realm and mine, a sect of perilous consequence, such as would have no kings, but a presbytery; and take our place, while they enjoy our privilege, with a shade of God's Word, which none is judged to follow right, without by their censure they be so deemed. Yea, look we well unto them. When they have made in our people's hearts a doubt of our religion—and that we err, if they say so—what perilous issue this may make I rather think than mind to write. *Sapienti pauca.* I pray you stop the mouths, or make shorter the tongues of such ministers as dare presume to make *oraisons* in their pulpits for the persecuted in England for the gospel. Suppose you, my dear brother, that I can tolerate such scandals of my sincere government? No: I hope, however you be pleased to bear with their audacity towards yourself, yet you will not suffer a strange king receive that indignity at such caterpillars' hands, that instead of fruit I am afraid will stuff your realm with venom: of this I have particularised more to this bearer, together with other answers to his charge; beseeching you to hear them, and not to give more harbour to vagabond traitors and seditious inventors, but to return them to me, or banish them your land. And thus, with my many thanks for your honourable entertainment of my ambassador, [she means here the Earl of Worcester,] I commit you to God; who ever preserve you from all evil counsels, and send you grace to follow the best!"[2] To these wishes of Elizabeth both James and his prime minister, the Chancellor Maitland, responded with the utmost readiness. Indeed, the queen could scarcely resent the excesses of the Puritan clergy more violently than her brother-prince; although, from their influence over the people, he was compelled some-

[1] MS., State-paper Office, 1590. Memorial of sundry things moved to the King of Scots by the ambassador of England.

[2] MS., State-paper Office. Royal letters. Copy of the time, endorsed 6th July 1590. Copy of her Majestie's letter written to the King of Scots, with her own hand, and sent by Sir John Carmichael.

times to temporise. The ministers, accordingly, were commanded to forbear prayer in their sermons for the persecuted in England;[1] and equal activity was shewn against the intrigues of the Spaniards and the Catholic faction. When O'Rourke, an Irish chieftain, was detected in Glasgow, secretly beating up for recruits against the English, the King of Scots scrupled not to have him seized and delivered to Elizabeth. "I would to God," said he, writing to the queen, "your greatest enemies were in my hands; if it were the King of Spain himself, he should not be long undelivered to you: for that course have I taken me to, and will profess it till I die, that all your foes shall be common enemies to us both, in spite of the Pope, the King of Spain, and all the leaguers, my cousins not excepted, and the devil their master."[2]

In return for this devotion to her wishes, Elizabeth, forgetting her economy, transmitted, at various intervals, large sums to the king, complimented the young queen with presents, and flattered her by letters; whilst the chancellor, who had now consolidated his power, and could bid defiance to his opponents, entered into a cordial correspondence with Burghley. He reminded him of the "old familiar acquaintance and strict amity" which had subsisted between him and his late brother, the well-known Lethington; and declared his readiness and anxiety to shew himself worthy of the lord treasurer's friendly dealing and gentle messages sent recently by Carmichael. Speaking modestly of his own inferiority, he yet hoped that their mutual exertions would be followed by the best effects. "If," said he, "this microcosme of Britain, separate from the continent world, naturally joined in situation and language, and, most happily, by religion, shall be, by the indissoluble amity of the two princes, sincerely conserved in union, the antichristian confederates shall never be able to effect their bloody and godless measures." In conclusion, he promised, that whilst Burghley, by his large experience and wisdom, held the Roman Catholic party in check, to "the benefit of all sincerely professing Christ in Europe," he would himself keep a watchful eye over their proceedings in Scotland;[3] and so rigidly did he fulfil this, that, before the end of the year, watchfulness was turned into persecution, and the Catholics in vain petitioned for liberty of conscience, and pleaded the cruelty of being compelled to subscribe the Protestant Articles of religion.[4] Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that their intrigues with Spain and the continent should have continued; and that, although Bowes, the ambassador, informed Burghley that the state of Scotland had been brought to great quietness, it was that deceitful calm which not unfrequently precedes the tempest.[5]

For a while, however, all went on smoothly; and the king found leisure to become exceedingly active and agitated upon a subject which forms a melancholy and mysterious chapter in the history of the human mind—that of witchcraft. That many unfortunate and miserable beings, driven by poverty and want, by suspicion and persecution, by the desire of vengeance, the love of power, or a daring curiosity after forbidden knowledge, had renounced their baptismal vows, and entered, as they believed, into a compact with the author of all evil, cannot be doubted. The difficulty is to discover whether they were the victims of their own imagination, the dupes of impostors, or, which is not to be rejected as impossible or incredible, the subjects and recipients of diabolic influence and agency. During the summer of this year, the young Laird of Wardhouse had been seized

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 14th August 1590.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Royal letters. Endorsed, The King of Scots' letter to the Queen's Majesty, by Roger Ashton, 22d March 1590-1.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lord Thirlstane to the Lord High Treasurer, 13th August 1590.

[4] Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, 7th November 1590.

[5] MS., State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley.

with a mortal sickness which had carried him to the grave; and it was discovered that several witches had formed his image in wax, which having "roasted at a slow fire, the gentleman," it was said, "pined away insensibly, but surely, till he died."[1] This was alarming enough; but in the winter still darker deeds came to light, involving higher culprits and more daring transactions. Agnes Sampson, a woman, as Spottiswood says, "not of the base or ignorant sort of witches, but matron-like, grave, and settled in her answers," accused Bothwell of consulting her as to the probable continuance of the king's life; and Richard Graham, a notorious sorcerer, averred that the earl had sought him on the same errand. Agnes declared, when questioned by the judges, that "she had a familiar spirit," who, upon her call, appeared in a visible form, and resolved her of any doubtful matters, especially concerning life and death. The mode in which she summoned him was by calling out, "Holla, Master!" an invocation which he had taught her himself. She added, that he had undertaken to make away with the king, but had failed; pronouncing him (when challenged by her for his want of success) to be invulnerable to his incantations, and muttering, in a language which she did not understand, but which turned out to be respectable French, "*Il est homme de Dieu.*"[2] Of James's labours with this miserable woman, who was condemned and burnt, Bowes wrote to Burghley. The king, he said, by his own especial travel, had drawn Sampson, the great witch, to confess plainly her wicked estate and doings, and to discover sundry things touching his own life: how the witches sought to have had his shirt, or other linen about him, for the execution of their charms. In these doings the Lord Claud's name was implicated, and sundry other noble personages evil spoken of. The number of the witches known, were (he added) about thirty; but many others were accused of acts filthy, lewd, and fantastical.[3] On a future occasion, the royal curiosity and acuteness were rewarded by the discovery of more particulars involving the guilt of Bothwell. They came out in an examination to which James subjected the wizard Richard Graham, who, upon some hope held out of pardon, confessed that Bothwell sought to draw him to devise some means to hasten the king's death, alleging that he was driven to this to avoid his own; since a necromancer in Italy had predicted to him that he should become great in power and temporal possession, kill two men, fall into trouble with the king for two capital crimes, be pardoned for the first and suffer for the second. The three first events, he averred, had taken place as foretold him: he had become a mighty baron, had killed Sir William Stewart, and *Davie the Devil*, meaning David Hume of Manderston; been once pardoned; and now he or the king must go. Graham agreed to assist him; and James had the satisfaction of hearing some particulars of the incantation. An image of the royal person was formed of wax, and hung up between a *tod*, or fox, over which some spells had been muttered, and the head of a young calf, newly killed. It was added, that all this was well known to Jely Duncan, who is described by Bowes as a kind of whipper-in to the witches, being accustomed to scour the country and collect together all the Satanic fraternity and sisterhood. But although she admitted, at first, their dealings with Bothwell, she afterwards denied all; and as these unfortunate wretches were so severely tortured that one of them died under the rack, it is impossible to receive their evidence without the utmost suspicion.[4] Bothwell, however, amid loud asseverations of innocence, was seized and sent to prison, and an early convention of the estates called for his trial. But the evidence, by the king's own admission, was slender; the nobles seemed

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 23d July 1590.
[2] Spottiswood, p. 333.
[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, December 7, 1590.
[4] Ibid., 15th April 1591.

unwilling to countenance any violent proceedings against him; and the matter was so long delayed, that his fierce temper would endure confinement no longer; and breaking his prison, he buried himself amongst his friends and fastnesses in the Borders.[1]

This result greatly irritated the king, who consoled himself by bringing to trial one of the leading witches, named Barbara Napier, a woman well connected, and of whose conviction he entertained no doubt. To his astonishment, the jury did not conceive the evidence sufficient, and acquitted her. The verdict threw James into the greatest rage; yet it was difficult to know what was now to be done. An assize of error, as it was called, was a proceeding known and practised by the law of England, but it had never been introduced into Scotland; nor had it been heard of for centuries, that the king should sit in person as a judge in any criminal matter. James, however, shut his eyes to all difficulties, and determined to bring the refractory jurors to justice.[2] Accordingly, on the 7th of June, repairing from Falkland, he sat in person on the trial of the delinquents. All of them pleaded guilty, and put themselves, as it was then termed, in the king's will, so that there was little scope given to the exercise of regal acuteness. He made an oration, however, some sentences of which give a good picture of the style of his oratory: often pedantic and tedious, but not unfrequently epigrammatic and sententious. Alluding to the shocking state of the country and the prevalence of crimes, "I must advertise you," said he, "what it is that makes great crimes to be so rife in this country—namely, that all men set themselves more for friend than for justice and obedience to the laws. This corruption here *bairns suck at the pap;* and let a man commit the most filthy crimes that can be, yet his friends take his part; and first keep him from apprehension, and after, by fead or favour, by false assize, or some way or other, they find moyen of his escape: the experience hereof we have in Niddry. I will not speak how I am charged with this fault in court and choir, from prince and pulpit; yet this I say, that howsoever matters have gone against my will, I am innocent of all injustice in these behalfs. My conscience doth set me clear, as did the conscience of Samuel; and I call you to be judges herein. And suppose I be your king, yet I submit myself to the accusations of you, my subjects, in this behalf; and let any one say what I have done. And as I have thus begun, so purpose I to go forward; not because I am James Stuard, and can command so many thousands of men, but because God hath made me a king and judge, to judge righteous judgment.

"For witchcraft, which is a thing grown very common among us, I know it to be a most abominable sin; and I have been occupied these three quarters of a year for the sifting out of them that are guilty herein. We are taught by the laws, both of God and man, that this sin is most odious; and by God's law punishable by death. By man's law it is called *Maleficium* or *Veneficium*, an ill deed, or a poisonable deed; and punishable likewise by death. Now, if it be death as practised against any of the people, I must needs think it to be (at least) the like if it be against the king. Not that I fear death; for I thank God I dare in a good cause abide hazard." . . . "As for them," he concluded, "who think these witchcrafts to be but fantasies, I remit them to be catechised and instructed in these most evident points."[3]

James, perhaps, felt somewhat doubtful upon the subject of his personal courage, and was aware that his subjects shared in his apprehensions; but he was little aware how soon his courage and determination were to be put to the test, by the frightful state

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 5th May 1591. Also ibid., same to same, 22d June 1591.

[2] Ibid., same to same, 9th May 1591. Ibid., same to same, 21st May.

[3] MS., State-paper Office. The inquest which first went upon Barbara Nept, called before the king in the Tolbooth, June 7, 1591.

of the country and the frequent attacks upon the royal person. So, however, it happened. Between private feuds, the continuance of Catholic intrigues, the active and indignant countermovements of the Kirk, and the open rebellion of Bothwell, whose power and reckless bravery made him formidable to all parties, the whole land was thrown into a deplorable state of tumult and insecurity. In the Highlands, the Earl of Huntly and the Earl of Moray, two of the greatest houses in the north, engaged in a deadly quarrel, which drew in the Lairds of Grant, Calder, Mackintosh, and others, and made the fairest districts a prey to indiscriminate havoc and murder.[1] At court all was commotion and apprehension from the rivalry of the Master of Glammis, who began to be a favourite of the king, and Chancellor Thirlstane, who would brook no rival in power.[2] On the Borders, Bothwell welcomed every broken man and cruel murderer who chose to ride under his banner. Some time previous to the trials of the witches, this daring chief had invaded the supreme court, and carried off a witness from the bar, who was about to give evidence against one of his retainers, whilst the king, although in the next room, did not dare to interfere.[3] After his escape and triumph, his fierce temper impelled him to still greater excesses; and attacking the palace of Holyrood at the head of his desperate followers, he had nearly surprised and made prisoners both the king and the chancellor. Douglas of Spot, however, one of the principal leaders in this attack, lost time, by attempting to set at liberty some of his men who were imprisoned in the palace. An alarm was given: the king took refuge in one of the turrets; the chancellor barricaded his room, and bravely beat off the assailants; whilst the citizens of Edinburgh, headed by their provost, rushed into the outer court of the palace, and cutting their way through the outer ranks of the Borderers, compelled Bothwell to a precipitate flight.* He soon, however, became as formidable as ever; entered into a secret correspondence with England; leagued with the Duke of Lennox, who had quarrelled with Thirlstane; procured the countenance of the Kirk, by professing the most determined hostility to Huntly and the Catholic faction; and flattered himself, not without good grounds, that his next attack would be successful.

Meanwhile a tragedy occurred, which, even in that age, familiar with scenes of feudal atrocity, occasioned unusual horror. The reader may perhaps remember the utter destruction brought by the Regent Moray upon the great Earl of Huntly; his execution, and that of one of his sons; the forfeiture of his immense estates, and the almost entire overthrow of his house.[5] It was now thirty years since that miserable event: the favour of the king had restored the family of Gordon to its estates and its honours, and Huntly's ambition might have been satisfied; but the deep principle of feudal vengeance demanded blood for blood; and there was not a retainer of the house of Huntly, from the belted knight that sat at his master's right hand to the serving-man behind his chair, who did not acknowledge the sacred necessity of revenge. Time, which softens or dilutes most feelings, only added intensity to this: and now, when the hour of repayment was come, the debt was exacted with fearful interest. The then Earl of Moray, a Stewart, and representative of the famous regent, was one of the bravest and handsomest men of his time, a favourite at court, and dear to the people and the Kirk, who still looked fondly back to the days of his great ancestor. In deeds of arms and personal prowess, an old chronicle describes him as a

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 7th December 1590. Ibid., Lord Thirlstane to Burghley, 7th December 1590.

[2] Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, 20th November 1590.

[3] Ibid., same to same, 25th January 1590-1.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Roger Ashton to Bowes, 28th December 1591. Also ibid., Bowes to Burghley, 31st December 1591.

[5] *Supra*, vol. iii. pp. 166, 167.

sort of Amadis; "comely, gentle, brave, and of a great stature and strength of body."[1] This young nobleman had princely possessions in the north, and for some years deadly feud had raged between him and Huntly; but Lord Ochiltree, a Stewart, a firm friend of Moray's, was at this time exerting himself to bring about an agreement between the two barons; and had so far succeeded, that Moray, with a slender retinue, left his northern fastnesses, and came to his mother's castle of Dunibersel, a short distance from the Queensferry. Huntly, his enemy, was then at court in constant attendance upon the king; and Ochiltree, who had communicated with him, and informed him of Moray's wishes for a reconciliation, took horse and rode to Queensferry, intending to pass to Dunibersel and arrange an amicable meeting between the rival earls. To his surprise, he found that a royal order had been sent, interdicting any boats from plying that day between Fife and the opposite coast. But little suspicion was occasioned: he believed it some measure connected with the hot pursuit then going on against Bothwell, and was satisfied to abandon his journey to Dunibersel. This proved the destruction of his poor friend. That very day, the 7th of February, the king hunted; and Huntly, giving out that he meant to accompany the royal cavalcade, assembled his followers to the number of forty horse. Suddenly he pretended that certain news had reached him of the retreat of Bothwell; extorted from the king permission to ride against this traitor; and passing the ferry, beset the house of Dunibersel, and summoned Moray to surrender. This was refused; and in spite of the great disparity in numbers, the Stewarts resisted till nightfall, when Huntly, collecting the corn-stacks, or ricks, in the neighbouring fields, piled them up against the walls, commanded the house to be set on fire, and compelled its unhappy inmates to make a desperate sally that they might escape being burnt alive. In this outbreak the Sheriff of Moray was slain; but the young earl, aided by his great stature and strength, rushed forth all burned and blackened, with his long and beautiful tresses on fire and streaming behind him, threw himself with irresistible fury on his assailants, broke through the toils like a lion,[2] and escaped by speed of foot to the seashore. Here, unfortunately, his hair and the silken plume of his helmet blazed through the darkness; and his fell pursuers, tracing him by the trail of light, ran him into a cave, where they cruelly murdered him. His mortal wound, it was said, was given by Gordon of Buckie, who, with the ferocity of the times, seeing Huntly drawing back, cursed him as afraid to go as far as his followers, and called upon him to stab his fallen enemy with his dagger, and become art and part of the slaughter, as he had been of the conspiracy. Huntly, thus threatened, struck the dying man in the face with his weapon, who, with a bitter smile, upbraided him "with having spoilt a better face than his own."[3]

The outcry against this atrocious murder was deep and universal. Ochiltree, who had been deceived by Huntly and the chancellor, became loud in his clamours for revenge. In the north, Lord Forbes, an attached friend of Moray, carried his bloody shirt on a spear's head; and marching with the ghastly banner through his territories, incited his followers to revenge. In the capital, the Lady Doune, mother of the murdered earl, who with her daughters had narrowly escaped death at Dunibersel, exhibited the mangled corpses of her son and his faithful follower the Sheriff of Moray in the church at Leith; and Huntly, followed everywhere by a yell of public execration, fled first to Ravensheugh, a castle of Sinclair, baron of Roslin, and afterwards to his own country in the north.

[1] Historie of James the Sext, p. 246.

[2] The simile is Ashton's, in a letter to Bowes.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Roger Ashton to Bowes, 8th February 1591-2. Also ibid., same to same, 9th February 1591-2.

Amid all this tumult and ardent demands for instant justice and vengeance, the king exhibited such indifference, that strange suspicions arose, not only against James, but his great adviser the chancellor, between whom and Huntly there had arisen, for some time before Moray's murder, a suspicious familiarity. Huntly pleaded a royal commission for everything he had done. It was known that the king had been deeply incensed against Moray by a report that he had abetted Bothwell in his late attempt, and had even been seen with him in the palace on the night of the attack. It was remembered that Ochiltree had been prevented, as was alleged, by a royal order sent through the chancellor, from passing the ferry on the day of the murder; and the gossip of the court went even so far as to say that the young queen's favour for Moray had roused the royal jealousy. All this was confirmed, as may well be believed, when Huntly, being summoned to deliver himself up and take his trial, obeyed with alacrity; entered into ward in Blackness castle; and after a trifling investigation was dismissed and pardoned.[1] Against this gross partiality, Ochiltree, Lennox, Athole, and the whole friends of the murdered lord, loudly remonstrated. Bothwell, a Stewart, and cousin-german to Moray, availing himself of this favourable contingency, united his whole strength with theirs. The Kirk, indignant at the king's favour for Huntly, the head of the Roman Catholics, threw all its weight into the same scale; and James soon found that Moray's death, slightly as he regarded it at first, drew after it fatal and alarming effects. In the north, the Earl of Athole, with the Lairds of Mackintosh, Grant, Lovat, and their followers, carried fire and sword into Huntly's country, and kindled throughout that region innumerable lesser feuds and quarrels, which, like the moor-burning of their own savage districts, spread from glen to glen, and mountain to mountain, till half the land seemed in a blaze.[2] In the south, the Chancellor Maitland was no longer able to guide the government with his usual steady and determined hand. Hitherto he had defied all court storms, and made a bold head against his enemies; but his implication as a conspirator with Huntly in the murder of Moray, at first only suspected, but now, from some recent discoveries, absolutely certain, raised against him a universal detestation; the hatred of the people added new strength to his opponents, and he was driven from court.[3]

This retreat of his chief adviser weakened James; Elizabeth's coldness also annoyed him; and his uneasiness was changed into indignation, when he discovered that she looked favourably upon Bothwell; and that this traitorous subject, who had so lately invaded and dishonoured him, was in correspondence with her ministers. It was necessary, however, to dissemble his feelings, as the difficulties which now surrounded him were of a complicated kind. It had recently been his policy to balance the two great factions which divided the country, the Catholic and Protestant, as equally as possible: so that into whichever scale he threw the weight of his own authority it might preponderate. This mode of government, borrowed from Elizabeth, was more difficult to be carried through with success in Scotland than in the neighbouring country, not only from the superiority in vigour and intellect possessed by that princess over James, but from the greater feudal strength of the nobility of Scotland, and the greater weakness of the royal prerogative in that kingdom. In England various causes had concurred to destroy the greater barons: the wars of the two Roses were especially fatal to them; and it is well known that the reign of Henry the Eighth had been the grave of many of those potent

[1] Historie of James the Sext, p. 248.

[2] Moyse's Memoirs, p. 98. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 1st January 1592-3. Also ibid., Bowes to Burghley, 21st November 1592.

[3] Moyse's Memoirs, p. 97. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, December 17, 1592.

families who, before that time, were in the habit of dictating to the crown. But in Scotland not only were the feudal prerogatives more large, but the arm of the law was weaker; and the great houses, such as Hamilton, Argyle, Mar, Huntly, Douglas, and Stewart, were fresh and in vigour. Of all this the king was so well aware, that when Bowes, the English ambassador, on one occasion complained to him, that his reforms were ever *in fieri*, not *in posse*, James answered, that to reform such nobles as he had, would require the lives of three kings.[1]

There can be no doubt, however, that James, although clearly foreseeing the difficulties he was likely to encounter, had determined to weaken and suppress, as far as possible, the greater barons; and had resolved by every means in his power to strengthen the crown, raise up the middle classes and the lesser barons; and so balance and equalise the various powers of the constitution, that he should be able to hold the reins with a firm hand. There is a passage of a letter of Hudson's, one of the king's favourites, and a gentleman of his court, which points to this, and shews that, although James greatly favoured the chancellor, he was more his own minister than has been believed. Elizabeth, it appears, alarmed by some recent favours shewn to Huntly, had instructed Hudson to gain this high officer, hoping through him to influence the king; to which Hudson replied to Burghley, that the common opinion that James followed Maitland's guidance was an error; that the king was "himself the very centre of the government, and moved the chancellor and all the rest as he turned, minions and all. Although," he continued, "he bestow favour in great measure upon sundries, it doth not follow that he is directed by them. The chancellor is a great councillor, and the king seeth that his gifts merit his place; but he followeth directly his majesty's course in all."[2]

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 25th January 1590-1.

[2] Ibid., Hudson to Burghley, Dec. 7, 1591.

Acting along with this able minister, James had hitherto been able to hold in check the power of the higher nobles, and to keep the country in something like tranquillity. But the murder of Moray, the implication of the chancellor and suspected connivance of the king in this foul transaction; the compulsory retirement of Maitland, and the formidable combination which had taken place between the majority of the higher nobles and the Earl of Bothwell, threw the monarch into alarm, and forced him upon some measures which, under other circumstances, he would scarcely have adopted. His late favour to Huntly had damaged him in the affections of the Kirk: he now resolved to court its aid and to flatter it by unwonted concessions. These it is important to notice, as they led to no less a measure than the establishment of Presbytery by a prince to whom this form of ecclesiastical government appears to have been especially obnoxious. The acts passed in the parliament 1584, against the discipline and privileges of the Kirk, had long been a thorn in the side of the ministers; and they now, in an assembly held some time previous to the meeting of parliament, resolved to petition the king, not only for the abolition of these obnoxious statutes, but for a solemn legislative establishment of the Presbyterian system of church government.

Accordingly, parliament having assembled in June 1592, the assembly presented the four following articles or requests to the king:—

1. That the acts of parliament made in the year 1584, against the discipline and liberty of the Kirk, should be repealed, and the present discipline be ratified.

2. That the act of annexation should be abolished, and the patrimony of the Kirk restored.

3. That abbots, priors, and other prelates, pretending to ecclesiastical authority, and giving their vote in matters without any delegated power from the Kirk, should not be hereafter permitted to vote in parliament or other convention; and lastly,

4. That the land, which was polluted by fearful idolatry and bloodshed, should be purged.[1]

The first article, which went to rescind the acts of 1584, was long and keenly debated: for James was acute enough to detect the increased power which this must give to the ministers; and it is certain that no change had taken place in the mind of the monarch as to the dangers to be apprehended from the turbulence and independence of these bold and able men. The republican principles, the austere morality, and the extreme pulpit licence of the Kirk, were wholly opposed to all his ideas of ecclesiastical polity or civil government; but Maitland, who had now resumed his influence, though still absent from court, was solicitous to conciliate the friends of the murdered Moray, and to appease the people; and assisting the Kirk at this moment with the full weight of his influence and advice, the king, more from policy than affection, assented to the proposal. An act, accordingly, was passed, which is still regarded as the "Charter of the liberties of the Kirk."

It ratified its system of government by general assemblies, provincial synods, presbyteries, and particular sessions. It affirmed such courts, with the jurisdiction and discipline belonging to them, to be just, good, and godly; defined their powers; appointed the time and manner of their meeting; and declared that the acts passed in 1584 should be in no ways prejudicial to the privileges of the office-bearers in the Kirk in determining heads of religion, matters of heresy, questions of excommunication, appointment and deprivation of ministers; that another act of the same parliament, granting commissions to bishops to receive the royal presentations to bishoprics, and to give collation, should be rescinded; and that all presentations should be directed to their particular presbyteries, with full power to give collation and decide all ecclesiastical causes within their bounds, under the proviso that they admitted such ministers as were presented by the king or other lay patrons.[2]

Had the Kirk contented itself with these triumphs, and rested satisfied in the king's present dispositions, which appeared wholly in its favour, all things might have remained quiet: for the Catholics, convinced of the madness of their projects, were ready to abstain from all practices inimical to the religion of the state, on the single condition that they should not be persecuted for their adherence to the ancient faith. But the Kirk were not disposed to take this quiet course. The principle of toleration, divine as it assuredly is in its origin, yet so late in its recognition even amongst the best men, was then utterly unknown to either party, Reformed or Catholic. The permission even of a single case of Catholic worship, however secret; the attendance of a solitary individual at a single mass, in the remotest district of the land, at the dead hour of night, in the most secluded chamber, and where none could come but such as knelt before the altar for conscience' sake, and in all sincerity of soul; such worship, and its permission for an hour, was considered an open encouragement of Antichrist and idolatry. To extinguish the mass for ever, to compel its supporters to embrace what the Kirk considered to be the purity of Presbyterian truth, and this under the penalties of life and limb, or in its mildest form of treason, banishment, and forfeiture, was considered not merely praiseworthy, but a point of high religious duty; and the whole apparatus of the Kirk, the whole inquisitorial machinery of detection and persecution, was brought to bear upon the accomplishment of these great ends. Are we to wonder that, under such a state of things, the intrigues of the Catholics for the overthrow of a government which sanctioned such a system continued; that when they knew, or suspected, that the king him-

[1] Calderwood, pp. 267, 268.

[2] M'Crie's Life of Melvil, p. 403. Aikman's Translation of Buchanan's History of Scotland; with a Continuation to the Present Time, vol. iii. pp. 185, 186.

self was averse to persecution, they were encouraged to renew their intercourse with Spain, and to hope that a new outbreak, if properly directed, might lead either to the destruction of a rival faith, or to the establishment of liberty of conscience?

A discovery which occurred at this time corroborates these remarks, and drew after it important consequences. The Kirk, in the course of its inquisitions, in which it was assisted by Sir Robert Bowes, the resident English ambassador, received certain information that George Kerr, a Catholic gentleman, and brother of the Abbot of Newbottle,[1] was secretly passing into Spain with important letters. Upon this, Mr Andrew Knox, minister of Paisley, setting off with a body of armed men furnished by Lord Ross, traced Kerr to Glasgow, and thence to the little isles of the Cumbrays in the mouth of the Clyde, where they seized him in the night, immediately after he had got on board the ship which was to carry him to the continent. His luggage was then searched, the packets of letters found, and he himself hurried a prisoner to Edinburgh; where the provost and the citizens, alarmed by the reports which had already reached them, received him with shouts of triumph and execration. The unfortunate man at first attempted to deny all; and as he had many friends in the council who opposed severity, was likely to escape; but at the king's special command he was put to the torture,[2] and on the second stroke of the boots confessed the conspiracy; the main branch of which was to secure and hasten the descent of a Spanish force upon the coast of Scotland. This army was to be joined by the Earls of Huntly, Errol, and Angus, with Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchendown, uncle to Huntly, and other Catholic barons. Amongst the letters seized, and which appeared to be written by Scottish Jesuits and seminary priests to their brethren on the continent, there were found several signatures of the Earls of Huntly, Errol, and Angus. These were written at the bottom of blank sheets of paper, with the seals of these noblemen attached to them; from which circumstance the plot received the name of the "Spanish Blanks." It was at first suspected by Bowes, who was familiar with all the *arcana* of conspiracy, that the blanks were written over with ink of white vitriol, prepared;[3] but it turned out that they were to be filled up afterwards by Kerr, according to verbal instructions, and to be delivered to the King of Spain.[4] It may well be imagined that this discovery—serious enough, certainly, in its known features, and around which there was that air of mystery which gave ample scope for all kinds of terror and exaggeration—was enough to throw the kirk and the people into a state of high excitement. The council, having examined the letters, had no doubt of their authenticity. Sir John Carmichael and Sir George Hume were sent to the king, who was at Stirling, to entreat his immediate presence. Angus, then at Edinburgh, and recently returned from an expedition to the north, was committed to the castle of Edinburgh; and proclamation made that all Jesuits, seminary priests, and excommunicates, should, within three hours, depart the city on pain of death.[5] A convention of the nobility and Protestant gentry was forthwith held, and, headed by the ministers, pre-

[1] Newbottle Abbey, on the South Esk, near Dalkeith.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 6th February 1592-3. Bowes, writing to Burghley, says, "Commission is given to Justice-clerk, Blantyre, and George Young, to offer him the torture this day. But many think that he shall suffer the torment without confession."

It appears by a letter of Bowes to the Queen of England, 21st January 1592-3, that Mr Andrew Knox received an assurance from Elizabeth, that "good disposition and regard should be had of his labours, charges, perils, and services;" whereupon Mr Andrew returned into his country to search out the haunts of the English Catholics lurking in those parts.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, January 1, 1592-3.

[4] Ibid., January 13, 1592-3.

[5] Ibid., January 3, 1592-3.

sented themselves at the palace, and insisted on the instant prosecution and punishment of the traitors; declaring their readiness to hazard life and property in the service. The Queen of Scotland, and the powerful house of the Setons, earnestly interceded for Kerr,[1] who in the end escaped; but Graham of Fintry, found to be deeply implicated, was imprisoned; and Angus's trial and forfeiture was considered so certain, that the courtiers, wolf-like, began to smell the prey; and Sir George Hume wrote pressingly to Lord Hume, requiring him to come speedily to court that he might have his share in the spoils.[2]

James's conduct at this crisis was both wise and spirited. He had received information, much about the same time when the Spanish conspiracy came to light, that his traitorous subject Bothwell, who had twice invaded his palace and attempted to seize his person, was received in England and regarded with favour by Elizabeth. Now was the time, he felt, to put down Bothwell for ever. He was well aware that this fierce and formidable insurgent was favoured secretly by the Kirk, and by many of those nobles who now insisted upon the instant pursuit of the Popish earls. He was aware, too, that Elizabeth's alarm on the discovery of the Spanish Blanks would prompt her to advise the most severe measures against the delinquents, and he ably availed himself of all this. To the Kirk and the Protestant barons he gave the most friendly reception; spoke loudly of Angus's instant forfeiture; and not only agreed to the pursuit of Huntly, Errol, and their associates, but declared that he would lead the army in person and seize them in their northern strongholds. Nor were these mere words. Huntly, Errol, and Auchendown were commanded to enter themselves in ward at St Andrews before the 5th February; public proclamation was made that all men should be ready, on the 25th of the same month, with armour and weapons, to march with the king in person against the traitors, if they failed to deliver themselves; and various committees were appointed for the examination of all suspected persons, belonging either to the nobility, barons, burgesses, or clergy.[3]

All this was most gratifying to the Kirk and the Protestant leaders amongst the nobility. But, in return for this, the king demanded as cordial a co-operation on their side for the attack and destruction of Bothwell, whose treasons, though of a different nature, were even more flagrant than those of the Catholic earls; and this they were not in a situation to refuse. Having thus secured the co-operation of the Kirk and the Protestant lords against Bothwell, James gave audience to Bowes, who was little prepared for the violence with which he was to be received. The ambassador had recently found himself in a difficult situation. He had been familiar with all the plots of Bothwell, and looked upon them with no unfavourable eye, although he took care not directly to implicate himself. He had repeatedly applied to Burghley to receive instructions and understand the queen's wishes: but Elizabeth was too cautious to commit herself; whilst Bowes knew for certain that she encouraged Bothwell secretly, and expressed the highest scorn and contempt for Huntly and the Spanish faction, whom she branded as base traitors who had sold their country. On this subject Elizabeth, shortly before this,[4] had sent a letter to James, part of which, relating to the Spanish faction, from its vigour, is worthy of preservation:—

"Advance not," said she, "such as hang their hopes on other strings than you may tune. Them that gold can corrupt, think not your gifts can assure. Who once have made shipwreck of their country, let them never enjoy

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, January 13, 1592-3.

[2] Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, January 13, 1592-3.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, January 19, 1592-3.

[4] On the 4th December 1592.

it. Weed out the weeds, lest the best corn fester. Never arm with power such whose bitterness must follow after you; nor trust not their trust that under any colour will thrall their own soil.

"I may not, nor will I, conceal overtures that of late full amply have been made me, how you may plainly know all the combiners against your state, and how you may entrap them, and so assure your kingdom. Consider, if this actor doth deserve surety of life, not of land, but such as may preserve breath, to spend where best it shall please you. When I see the day, I will impart my advice to whom it most appertains.

"Now bethink, my dear brother, what further you will have me do. In meanwhile, beware to give the reins into the hands of any, lest it be too late to revoke such actions done. Let no one of the Spanish faction in your absence, yea, when you are present, receive strength or countenance. You know, but for you, all of them be alike for me, for my particular. Yet I may not deny, without spot or wrinkle, but I abhor such as set their country to sale. And thus, committing you to God's tuition, I shall remain the faithful holder of my avowed amity,

"Your most affectionate Sister and Cousin."[1]

What was James's reply to this obscure epigrammatic epistle is not known; but very shortly after it was written, the Spanish conspiracy came to light, and the Scottish king at the same time discovered the favour shewn to Bothwell in England with the full countenance of the queen. Mr Lock, an agent of Burghley, and a near relative of the notorious intriguer, John Colvile, brother to the Laird of Easter Wemyss, had been sent down to Scotland with instructions to form a faction with the Kirk and the Protestant barons for Bothwell's restoration; and their plots had proceeded so far, that the attack upon the palace, which afterwards occurred in the autumn of this year, would probably have been enterprised sooner, but for the discovery of the Spanish Blanks.[2] Of all these English intrigues James was now aware; and when Bowes was admitted to an audience, the monarch broke into a violent passion. The Queen of England, he declared, did him foul injustice in countenancing a rebel and a traitor like Bothwell. Her subjects received and harboured him, and they pleaded her warrant to do so. If so, he must account it done to his scorn and dishonour. However, he should investigate the matter closely; and should it turn out so, (this he said loudly, and in the hearing of many about him,) there was an end to his amity with the queen, and with every man in England.

So unwonted a storm had never yet broken the serene tenor of James's temper; and Bowes found it difficult to appease it even by the most earnest assurances of Elizabeth's innocence.[3] In a subsequent interview, however, he was somewhat more successful. The Queen of England despatched a letter written wholly in her own hand, in a strain of so much conciliation, and fraught with so much sound advice, that the monarch was recovered; shewed the epistle, with many expressions of admiration, to his confidential counsellors and some of the chief ministers, and listened to their exhortations to proceed roundly against the Catholic lords. There were some difficulties, however, in the way. Huntly solemnly declared his innocence, and affirmed that the blanks were not signed by him. If he, Errol, and Angus delivered themselves by the appointed day, and were once secured in prison, there was little doubt of the issue; but if, as suspected, they fled and raised their feudal strength, the king must march against them; and, with an impoverished exchequer, who was to pay his troops?

[1] Warrender MSS., vol. B. p. 361. Endorsed, Delivered by Mr Bowes, December 4, 1592.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, December 27, 1592.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 19th Jan. 1592-3.

Elizabeth's bounty, he said, had flowed in a far more niggard stream than had been promised. He had looked to have five thousand a year, the sum allowed by Henry the Eighth to the queen herself when princess; but she had only given him three thousand.[1] As to that occasion of which she reminded him, when one year's charges for his behoof had come to nine thousand pounds, and six thousand men been kept in readiness for his service, he protested that by no effort could he recall such things to memory; but never would he press her for money unless at a time of extreme need like the present. But to explain all more fully, he meant (as he assured Bowes) to send her an ambassador, Sir Robert Melvil, or some other confidential councillor.[3]

Meantime, before any such resolution could be acted on, Elizabeth's anxiety, and the alarming confessions of Kerr, prompted her to despatch Lord Burgh with a message to the king, and instructions to press on the trials of the Spanish lords by every possible method. What had been fully expected by all who knew these bold insurgents had now occurred. Instead of a surrender of their persons on the day appointed, Huntly, Errol, Auchendown, and their associates, kept themselves within their strongholds in the north. Angus escaped from the castle of Edinburgh, letting himself down the walls by a rope, and joined his friends in the Highlands; and the king's council, with the higher nobles, became cold and inactive. But the monarch himself was roused by this opposition into unwonted energy. He alone had conducted the examination of Kerr, had advocated the use of torture against the advice of his ministers, and by this horrible expedient had extorted a confession. He now hurried forward the trial of Graham of Fintry, had him found guilty, and instantly executed; and having requested the prayers of the Kirk for success in his expedition, and appointed the Earl of Morton to be lieutenant-general in his absence, he placed himself at the head of his army and proceeded against the rebels.[3] To this extraordinary vigour of the king against the Spanish faction, Bowes, in his letter to Burghley, bore ample evidence. After mentioning that Fintry had offered fifty thousand pounds Scots to save his life, the ambassador observes, "the king in this hath remained resolute; and alone, without the assistance of any of his council, prosecuted the cause. And now, he saith, that as alone he hath drawn his sword against his rebels, without the council's aid or allowance of his nobility, so he will proceed, with the help of God, to punish and prosecute the traitors in these high treasons, by all the means in his power; and with the assistance of his barons, burghs, and Kirk, whom he findeth ready to aid him therein. He was occasioned to stay his journey two days beyond his diet for the trial and execution of Fintry, and for some wants which are yet slenderly supplied: nevertheless, he is ready and determined to enter into his *rode* tomorrow, wherein he shall be well strengthened with his barons; but few noblemen shall attend upon him."[4]

On the 24th of February, Lord Burgh, Elizabeth's ambassador, arrived in Edinburgh; and on his heels came intelligence of the success of the Scottish king.[5] James had advanced without a check to Aberdeen. Huntly and Errol, finding it impossible to make head against the royal forces, had fled, slenderly accompanied, to Caithness; and the Earl of Athole, who joined the king with twelve hundred foot and nine hundred horse, was appointed lieutenant-general beyond Spey, to reduce those unquiet regions and prevent their again falling under the power

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, January 27, 1592-3.
[2] Ibid.
[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 14th February 1592-3. Same to same, February 15, 1592-3. Same to same, February 21, 1592-3.
[4] Ibid., February 15, 1592-3.
[5] Ibid., Lord Burgh to Burghley, February 26, 1592-3.

of the rebels.[1] Meanwhile, the Catholic earls were declared forfeited, and their estates seized by the crown; but, from some circumstances, it was augured that the king meant to deal leniently, and not utterly wreck them. Strathbogie castle, belonging to Huntly, was given to Archibald Carmichael, with sixteen of the royal guard for a garrison; but the Countess of Huntly, sister to the Duke of Lennox, was allowed to retain, for her winter residence, the Bog of Gicht, his greatest castle and estate. Athole received the rest of his lands, not in gift—but to hold them as steward or *factor* for the crown. Errol's father-in-law, the Earl Marshal, bought his son's escheat for a thousand marks, with the keeping of his castle of Slaines: his mother held his other house of Logie-Almond for her jointure; and Athole, whose sister he had married for his second wife, became factor of his other possessions. Angus was more severely dealt with, not being saved by any connexion or relationship with men in power.[2] His house and castle of Tantallon were delivered to the keeping of the Laird of Pollard; Bonkle and Preston to William Hume, brother of the king's favourite, Sir George Hume; Douglasdale, and the rest of his lands, seized for debt. On the whole, however, the rebel lords, considering their crimes, were leniently dealt with. Their persons were safe in the fastnesses of Caithness; their patrimonial interest, and rights of succession, were considered to be still entire till an act of parliament had confirmed the forfeitures; and part of their estates were placed in friendly hands. So evident was all this, that Lord Burgh wrote to Burghley, that the king "dissembled a confiscation," and would leave the rebels in full strength.[3]

On his return from his northern expedition, James gave audience to Lord Burgh, and expressed himself gratified by the message and advice of Elizabeth. It was her interest, he said, to co-operate heartily with him in all his present actions, and assist him to her utmost. Was she not as deeply concerned to hinder the Spaniard setting his foot in Scotland as in France or the Low Countries? At this moment money was imperatively called for; an armed force of large extent must be kept up; he needed troops to guard his person, exposed to hourly danger from the plots of his nobles, and the snares of the arch-traitor Bothwell, with whose daring character she was too well acquainted:—he needed them to overawe the districts still favourable to the Catholic lords; to garrison their houses, which, according to his good sister's advice, he had seized; to watch the coast where the Spaniards were likeliest to land: to repulse them if they effected a descent. The cause was common to both; and he looked not only for sympathy and counsel, but for hard coin and brave men. On one point he assured Burgh, that the message which he took back must be peremptory. "Bothwell," said he, "that vile traitor, whose offences against me are unpardonable, and such as, for example's sake, should make him to be abhorred by all sovereign princes, is harboured in England: let my sister expel him, or deliver him up, as she tenders her own honour and my contentment. Should he henceforth be conforted or concealed in her dominions, I must roundly assure her, not only that our amity is at an end, but that I shall be enforced to join in friendship with her greatest enemies for my own safety."[4]

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lord Burgh to Burghley, March 6, 1592-3.

[2] Angus's mother was a Graham, daughter of the Laird of Morphy. He married the eldest daughter of the Lord Oliphant. MS., State-paper Office, 1st July 1592. A Catalogue of the Nobility in Scotland. The original endorsement had been simply "Of the nobility in Scotland." Burghley has prefixed the words "A catalogue." I mention this minute circumstance to prove the authenticity of the paper, which is a highly valuable document, shewing the ages, matrimonial descent, and marriages, of the whole body of the Scottish nobility at the period, 1st July 1592. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XXIII.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lord Burgh to Burghley, March 5, 1592-3.

[4] Answers for the Lord Burgh, concerning Bothwell, MS. wholly in James's hand. Warrender MSS., book B, p. 401.

This spirited remonstrance was not out of place; for at this moment Elizabeth, pursuing her old policy of weakening Scotland, by destroying its tranquillity and keeping up its internal commotions, was encouraging Bothwell to a new and more desperate attempt against the king and his government. Lord Burgh had received secret instructions to entertain this fierce and lawless man. To discover his strength and means, and to increase his faction at court and with the ministers of the Kirk, was the secret part of this ambassador's mission; and when James expressed to Bowes his admiration of the eloquence, grace, and courtly manners, of this nobleman, he little knew the hidden mine which he was digging under his feet. Yet so it was. Bothwell had offered his services to the English queen; had written to Lord Burghley; had received an answer of encouragement, though cautiously worded; and had been ordered by the high treasurer to write secretly to the queen.[1] It will immediately appear how rapidly this new conspiracy came to maturity, and how suddenly it burst upon the king.

Meanwhile, the various factions and family feuds amongst the nobility had increased to such a degree, that the whole cares of the government fell upon the monarch; and James, naturally indolent and fond of his pastimes, began to languish for the return of the Chancellor Maitland. This powerful minister had been driven from court by the antipathy of the Queen of Scots, the Duke of Lennox, and the whole faction of the Stewarts, who held him as their mortal enemy, and had repeatedly plotted against his life. The exact cause of the queen's "heavy wrath" against Maitland, appears to have been a mystery alike to the king and to Bowes; but it was deeply rooted, and nearly touched her honour. He was at deadly feud also with the Master of Glammis, and hated by Bothwell, who regarded him as the author of all his calamities, and the forger of that accusation of witchcraft, under the imputation of which he was now a banished and broken man. It was difficult for the king to recall to power a minister who lay under such a load of enmity; and, for the present, he was contented to visit him in his retreat at Lethington, and consult him upon the affairs of government.[2] All, however, looked to his probable restoration to power; and the bare idea of it occasioned the utmost jealousy and heartburning in court.

Nothing, at this moment, could be more deplorable than the torn and distracted state of the Scottish nobility. The Duke of Lennox and the Lord Hamilton, the two first noblemen in the realm, were at mortal feud; the subject of their quarrel being an attempt, on the part of Lennox, to get himself declared the next in succession to the crown, to the exclusion of the prior right of the family of Hamilton.[3] Huntly again, and all those barons who supported him, were at feud with the potent Earl of Athole, and the whole race of Stewart; the cause of their enmity being an unquenchable thirst of revenge for the murder of the Earl of Moray. Argyle, Ochiltree, and all the barons who adhered to them, were at feud with Lord Thirlstane the chancellor, Lord Hume, Lord Fleming, and their faction and allies; in which course they were urged forward by the enmity of the Queen of Scots.[4] It is difficult, by any general expressions, to convey a picture of the miserable state of a country torn by such feuds as these. Nor were these the

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bothwell to Thomas Musgrave, whom he styles his "Loving brother, Captain of Bewcastle," 7th March 1592-3. MS., State-paper Office, Mr Lock's Instructions, 10th February 1592-3, wholly in Lord Burghley's hand.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 6th February 1592-3. Also ibid., 7th April 1593. "Occurrents in Scotland" brought by the Lord Burgh, who came to the court 14th April. This endorsation is by Burghley. Also ibid., Bowes to Burghley, 19th April 1593.

[3] Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, May 20, 1593.

[4] MS., State-paper Office, Occurrents of Scotland, 7th April 1593.

sole causes of disquiet: Huntly, Angus, and Errol, although declared traitors, were at large in the north; Bothwell, whom the king justly regarded as his mortal enemy, was also at liberty, harboured sometimes on the Borders, sometimes in England, and even daring to enter the capital in disguise and hold secret intercourse with the noblemen about the king's person. The intrigues of the Catholics, although checked by the late discoveries, were not at an end; and the ministers of the Kirk, utterly dissatisfied with the leniency which James had exhibited to the rebel earls, began to attack his conduct in the pulpit, and to throw out surmises of his secret inclinations to Popery. Is it a subject of wonder that James, thus surrounded with danger and disquietude, without a minister whom he could trust, or a nobility on whose loyalty and affections he could for a moment depend, should have been driven into measures which may often appear inconsistent and capricious? The sole party on whom he could depend was that of the ministers of the Kirk, with the lesser barons and the burghs;[1] and their support was only to be bought at the price of the utter destruction of the Catholic earls, and the entire extirpation of the Catholic faith.

To this sweeping act of persecution the monarch would not consent. At this moment thirteen of the nobility of Scotland were Catholics;[2] and in the northern counties a large proportion of the people were attached to the same faith. It was insisted on, by the leading ministers of the Kirk, in a convention of the estates which the king summoned at this time,[3] that the strictest investigation should be made for the discovery and imprisonment of all suspected of heresy; and that, under the penalties of forfeiture and banishment, they should be compelled to recant, and embrace the reformed religion. The severity and intolerance of such demands will be best understood by quoting the words of the original. The Kirk represented that, "Seeing the increase of Papistry daily within this realm," it was craved of his majesty, with his council and nobility at that time assembled, "that all Papists within the same may be punished according to the laws of God and of the realm. That the act of parliament might strike upon all manner of men, landed or unlanded, in office or not, as it at present strikes against beneficed persons. That a declaration be made against all Jesuits, seminary priests, and trafficking Papists, pronouncing them guilty of treason; and that the penalties of the act may be enforced against all persons who conceal or harbour them, not for three days, as it now stands, but for any time whatsoever. That all such persons as the Kirk had found to be Papists, although they be not excommunicated, should be debarred from occupying any office within the realm, as also from access to his majesty's company, or enjoying any benefit of the laws. That upon this declaration, the pains of treason and other civil pains should follow, as upon the sentence of excommunication; and that an act of council should be passed to this effect, which in the next parliament should be made law." If the king agreed to these demands, the convention promised, for their part, that "their bodies, goods, friends, allies, servants, and possessions, should be wholly at his service, in any way he was pleased to employ them." During the whole pursuit of this cause, (the utter destruction of all Papistry within the realm,) they declared, that not only their whole numbers should be, at all times, a guard to the royal person, but that the king might select from them any force he pleased as a daily body-guard; the pay of which, however, they prudently added, ought to be levied from the possessions of the Catholics; and if this were not enough, they would themselves make up the difference.[4]

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lord Burgh to Burghley, 30th March 1593.

[2] MS., State-paper Office, Catalogue of the Nobility of Scotland, 1st July 1592.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, April 19, 1593.

[4] MS., State paper Office, "Humble petition of the General Assembly of the Kirk,

To these sweeping and severe penalties, James would by no means consent; and the Kirk, irritated by his refusal, withdrew that assistance and co-operation which it had hitherto lent him in preserving peace and good order. The effects of this were soon apparent. Instead of the happy tranquillity which had reigned during his absence in Denmark, and which he had mainly ascribed to the efforts of the ministers, the capital, as the time of the parliament approached, presented almost daily scenes of outrage and confusion. The security and sanctity of domestic life were invaded and despised; ruffians under the command of, and openly protected by the nobles, tore honourable maidens from the bosom of their families, and carried them off in open day. James Gray, a brother of the notorious Master of Gray, seized a young lady named Carnegie, an heiress, and then living under her father's roof; carried her forcibly down a narrow close, or street, to the North Loch, a lake which then surrounded the castle; delivered her to a party of armed men, who dragged her into a boat, her hair hanging about her face, and her clothes almost torn from her person; whilst Gray's associate, Lord Hume, kept the streets with his retainers, beat off the provost, who attempted a rescue, and slew some of the citizens, who had presumed to interfere. Next day the chief magistrate carried his complaint in person before the king. "Do you see here any of my nobles whom you can accuse?" said James. At that moment Hume was standing beside James; but when the unhappy provost encountered his fierce eye, the impeachment stuck in his throat from terror, and he retired silent and abashed.[1] The outrage was the more shameful, as Gray was a gentleman of the king's household, and had been assisted by Sir James Sandilands and other courtiers; whilst the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Mar were playing tennis hard by, and abstained from all interference. So atrocious an insult upon the laws, and the miserable weakness exhibited by the king and the chief magistrate, appear to have made a deep impression on Burghley, who has written on the margin of Bowes's letter this pithy note: "A miserable state, that may cause us to bless ours, and our governess."[2] It was not long after this that a day of law, as it was termed, was to be kept for the trial of Campbell of Ardkinglass, accused of the murder of the Laird of Caddell, a gentleman of the name of Campbell, who had himself been a principal actor in the tragedy of the Earl of Moray. Ardkinglass was a relative and favourite of Argyle, who assembled his friends, and on the day of trial entered the capital with a formidable force. The accused was about to be married to a natural daughter of Lord John Hamilton, which occasioned the muster of the whole power of that house; and the Chancellor Thirlstane, esteeming the opportunity a favourable one to exhibit his strength, and prepare the way for his return to court, rode from his retirement into the city, attended by Arbroath, Montrose, Seton, Livingston, Glencairn, Eglinton, and other powerful friends.[3] This again was sufficient to rouse the fears of his enemies, (the party of the queen,) who assembled in great strength, led by the Duke of Lennox, and numbering in their ranks, Mar, Morton, Hume, the Master of Glammis, Sir George Hume, Lord Spiny, and Sir James Sandilands. The Border barons, too, Lord Maxwell and Cessford, were on their march; the

craved of his Majesty's Council and nobility presently convened. Fra Dundee, this Lord's day, 29th April 1593." Also MS., State-paper Office, "The Effects of the Answers of this Convention to the Articles proponed by the King's Majesty."

[1] MS., Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1137. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 10th June 1593.

[2] MS., Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1137. MS. Letter. State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 10th June 1593.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 17th June 1593. Also ibid., same to same, 20th June 1593.

lords of Session, who had to try the criminal, and trembled for their lives, had resolved to raise a body of a hundred men to protect them; and the townsmen were, in the meantime, kept day and night under arms. All this was most formidable to the king, who found himself almost alone amid his difficulties.[1] The danger, too, was increased by the sudden apparition, amid the darkness, of a meteor which had ever indicated perplexity and change. Captain James Stewart, once the formidable and haughty Earl of Arran, had been seen lately in the palace. It was known he had been favourably received by James in several secret interviews; the queen and the duke were his friends; his misfortunes had neither tamed his pride, nor quelled that fierce energy and unscrupulous daring which had prompted him to destroy the Regent Morton; and at this crisis, when all were anticipating the return of the chancellor to power, it was suspected that the enemies of Maitland had determined to recall Stewart, and employ him for the destruction of this minister.[2] He had already pulled down one far mightier from his palmy state: what, said the queen and Lennox, was to prevent him from being successful against another?

Amid these complicated distresses James had scarcely one counsellor on whom he could rely. With his capital bristling with steel-clad barons, each feeling himself superior to the throne or the law; the streets in possession of tumultuous bodies of retainers and feudal banditti, armed to the teeth, and commanded by men at mortal feud with each other; his court and palace divided by the intrigues of the several rival factions; diffident even of the gentlemen who waited on his person; distracted by reports that troopers had been seen hovering in the neighbourhood, completely armed and disguised;[3] deserted for the time by the Kirk; uncertain as yet of the success of the embassy of Sir Robert Melvil, whom he had lately sent to Elizabeth; and tormented by hourly reports of undefined but urgent dangers and mysterious conspiracies,—the wonder is, that a prince of James's indolent and timid temper should not have sunk under such a state of things. But the emergency seemed to rouse him; and by an unusual exertion of firmness and good sense, he succeeded in warding off the dangers, persuaded the barons to dismiss their followers, and brought about a reconciliation between the queen's faction, led by the duke, and their powerful enemy the Chancellor Maitland. It had long been evident to the king that, in the present state of the country, no hand but that of Maitland could save the government from absolute wreck and disruption; and it was agreed, that on the conclusion of the parliament, which was now on the eve of meeting, this minister should return to court, and be reinstated in his high office.[4]

Scarce, however, was this danger averted than the city was thrown into a new state of excitement by the shrieks and lamentations of a troop of miserable women, who had travelled from the Borders, the victims and survivors of a recent "*raid*" conducted by the Laird of Johnston. Their purpose was to throw themselves before the king, and demand justice for the slaughter of their sons and husbands, whose bloody shirts they held above their heads, exhibiting them to the people as they marched through the streets, and imprecating vengeance upon their murderers. It was a sight which, in any other country, might well have roused both pity and indignation; but though the people murmured, the ghastly procession passed on without further notice, and neither king nor noble condescended to interfere.[5]

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 17th June 1593.
[2] Ibid., 20th June 1593
[3] Ibid., June 19, 1593.
[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, June 19, 1593. Also ibid., Bowes to Burghley, June 22, 1593. Also ibid., same to same, June 28, 1593.
[5] MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1138, 1139.

The parliament now assembled; but its proceedings were delayed by a quarrel between the higher nobles for the precedency in bearing the honours. At length it was arranged that Lennox should carry the crown, Argyle the sceptre, and Morton the sword; and that, in the absence of the Chancellor Maitland, Alexander Seton, president of the Session, should fill his place, and conduct the proceedings.[1] Bothwell was then proclaimed a traitor at the Cross; and the queen's jointure, which had been settled at her marriage, and regarding which some difficulties had arisen, was confirmed. To conciliate the Kirk, an act was passed exempting ministers' stipends from taxation; another statute was introduced against the Mass; and a strict inquisition ordered to be made for all Papists and seminary priests: but on the great subject for which it was understood parliament had met, the prosecution and forfeiture of the Popish earls, the party of the Kirk were miserably disappointed, or rather, all their gloomiest expectations were fulfilled. Huntly, Errol, Angus, and Auchendown, escaped forfeiture. It had been secretly resolved by the king, that no extreme proceedings should be adopted against these noblemen, who had a numerous and powerful party on their side,[2] till Sir Robert Melvil, then at the English court, had brought an answer from Elizabeth; and although the Earl of Argyle, Lord Forbes, Lord Lindsay, and the Protestant faction, anxiously urged the most severe measures, James was resolute. Mr David Makgill, the king's advocate, a man of extraordinary talent, but who had often opposed the Kirk, declared that the summonses were informal, the evidence of traitorous designs and correspondence with Spain insufficient; and that it was impossible for any act of attainder to pass in the present meeting of the estates.[3]

This for the time settled the matter: but the Kirk were deeply indignant; and their champion, Mr John Davison, denounced the proceedings, and attacked the sovereign in the pulpit on the Sunday which succeeded their close. "It was a black parliament," he said; "for iniquity was seated in the high court of justice, and had trodden equity under foot. It was a black parliament, for the arch-traitors had escaped; escaped, did he say! no: they were absolved; and now all good men might prepare themselves for darker days: trials were at hand: it had ever been seen that the absolving of the wicked imported the persecution of the righteous. Let us pray," said he, in conclusion, "that the king, by some sanctified plagues, may be turned again to God."[4]

Such plagues as Davison thus prayed for, were nearer at hand than many imagined; for Elizabeth, according to her favourite policy, had more than one plot now carrying forward in Scotland. Her accredited ambassador, Sir Robert Bowes, was indeed instructed to keep up the most friendly assurances, and to promise the King of Scots her cordial assistance in defeating Bothwell, and destroying the Roman Catholic faction; yet at this moment she had sent Mr Henry Lock into Scotland, who, with his brother-in-law, the notorious Mr John Colvile, and Bothwell himself, met secretly in Edinburgh, and organised a formidable confederacy,[5] the object of which was to bring in Bothwell, take possession of the king's person, overwhelm the Chancellor Maitland, who was on the eve of being recalled to power, and render the Kirk triumphant over its enemies. To this plot the Duke of Lennox, the Earl of Mar, the Earl of Athole, Lord Ochiltree, and the whole noblemen and barons of the name and race of Stewart, were par-

[1] MS., British Museum, Caligula, D. II. 128. Bowes to Burghley, July 16, 1593.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, June 20, 1593.

[3] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, D. II. Bowes to Burghley, July 8; also July 10, and July 14, 1593.

[4] MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1139.

[5] MS., State-paper Office, B.C., John Carey to Burghley, August 1, 1593.

ties; and they chose this meeting of the three estates, when the king was surrounded by many of their faction, to carry their purpose into execution. The parliament was now about to terminate, when, on the night of the 23d of July, Bothwell was secretly conveyed into the house of Lady Gowrie, which adjoined the palace of Holyrood. This lady's daughter was the Countess of Athole, to whose courage and ingenuity the success of the plot was principally owing. Early in the morning of the 24th of July, she smuggled Bothwell and Mr John Colville, by a back passage, into the anteroom adjoining the king's bed-chamber, hid them behind the arras, removed the weapons of the guard, and locked the door of the queen's bedchamber, through which the king might have escaped. The gates of the palace were then occupied by the Duke and Athole, who placed a guard upon them. All this time James was asleep; but he awoke at nine, and calling for one of the gentlemen of his bedchamber, got up and threw his nightgown about him. An alarm now suddenly rose in the next room; and the king rushing out with his hose about his heels, and his under-garments in his hands, confronted Bothwell, who had glided from behind the hangings, and stood with his drawn sword in his hand, Colvile being beside him. James shouted "Treason!" and ran to the door of the queen's bedroom; but it was found locked; and nothing remained but to face his enemy, which, when driven to it, he did with unwonted spirit, and his usual voluble eloquence. "Come on," said he, "Francis: you seek my life, and I know I am wholly in your power. Take your king's life: I am ready to die. Better to die with honour than live in captivity and shame. Nay, kneel not man," he continued, (by this time the Duke of Lennox and Athole had come in, and Bothwell and Colvile had thrown themselves on their knees;) "kneel not, and add hypocrisy to treason. You protest, forsooth, you only come to sue for pardon, to submit yourself to your trial for witchcraft, to be cleansed by your peers of the foul imputations which lie heavy on you. Does this violent manner of repair look like a suppliant? Is it not dishonourable to me, and disgraceful to my servants who have allowed it? What do you take me for? Am I not your anointed king, twenty-seven years old, and no longer a boy or a minor, when every faction could make me their property? But you have plotted my death, and I call upon you now to execute your purpose: for I will not live a prisoner and dishonoured. As he said this, the king sat calmly down, as if prepared for the worst; but Bothwell, still on his knees, loudly disclaimed all such murderous intentions, and kissing the hilt of his sword, took it by the point, delivered it to his sovereign, and placing his head beneath James's foot, bared his neck of its long tresses, (then the fashion of the young gallants of the day,) and called upon him to strike it off if he believed that he ever harboured a thought against his royal person.[1] The Duke of Lennox, Athole, and Ochiltree, now vehemently interceded for the earl; and James, raising him from the ground, retired into a window recess to talk apart, when an uproar arose below in the streets, and the citizens of Edinburgh, who had heard a rumour of the enterprise, rushed tumultuously into the palace-yard, headed by their provost, Alexander Hume, who loudly called to the king, then standing at the open casement, that, on a single word from him, they would force the doors and rid him of the traitors about him. James, however, who dreaded to be slain, or torn in pieces, if the two factions came to blows, commanded the citizens to disperse; and taking refuge in that dissimulation of which he was so great a master, pretended to be reconciled to Bothwell, fixed a near day for his trial, and simply stipulated that, till he was acquitted, he should retire from court. To all

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, August 18, 1593. Melvil's Memoirs, Bannatyne edition, pp. 414, 415.

this the earl agreed. Next day his peace was proclaimed, by the heralds, at the Cross. The people, of whom he was a great favourite, crowded round him; and not only his own faction, which was very strong, but the ministers of the Kirk, shewed themselves highly gratified at his return.[1]

Having settled this, Bothwell left the capital; and attended only by two servants, rode to Berwick, where he had an interview with Mr John Carey, the son of Lord Hunsdon, and governor of that Border town; shewed him the commission under the King of Scots' hand assuring him of pardon; professed the utmost devotion to Elizabeth; and declared that, within a brief season, he expected to be made "lieutenant-general of the whole country."[2] He then proceeded to Durham, on his road, as he said, to the English court, to confer with her majesty "what course it would please her to direct for his guidance;" and on reaching that city, insisted on thrusting himself into the confidence and becoming the guest of Dr Toby Mathews, the dean, one of the council of the north; who vehemently declined his explanations, professed his ignorance of "Scottish causes," and advised him to address himself to Burghley, Lord Hunsdon, or Sir Robert Bowes. All was in vain, however. The Scottish earl settled himself on the venerable dignitary, and "putting him to silence," ran over the story of his whole courses, and ended with his late seizure of the king. Mathews, who had no mind to be made a party in such violent matters, did not permit his eyelids to slumber till he had written an account of it all to Burghley. His letter, which is dated at midnight, on the 2d August, gives us an excellent account of the interview. "This day," says he, "about three of the clock afternoon, came hither to my house, the Earl of Bothwell, thereunto moved, as he protested, as well by some good opinion of me conceived, as for that he understands I am one of her majesty's council established in the north. . . . And albeit I was very loath to enter into any speech of the Scottish affairs, especially of state, wishing him to write thereof to your lordship, or to the lord president; or, if he so thought good, to negotiate his business with her majesty's ambassador resident in Scotland; yet could I not avoid it; but he would needs acquaint me with somewhat thereof. . . : Wherewith, putting me, as it were, to silence, he began, with exceeding amplifications, to acknowledge himself most bounden to her majesty for the permission he hath enjoyed in Northumberland and thereabouts, notwithstanding the king's importunity and practice of his enemies to the contrary; and to protest, with all solemnity, before the majesty of God, that her highness, in regard thereof, shall ever have him a loyal and most faithful *Englishman* hereafter: albeit, heretofore, he were thought never in opinion a Papist, yet in affection and faction a *Spaniard*. 'Well done once, my lord,' quoth I, 'is double well said;' which word, although he took somewhat displeasantly, yet did it occasion him to affirm and confirm the same, over and over again, so far as possibly may stand with the amity of both the princes, and the perpetual conservation of religion now openly professed both in England and Scotland.

"Then began he to discourse the manner and means of his late enterprise, and entrance to the king's presence; . . . which, to mine understanding, was a plain surprise of the king in his bedchamber, made by the earl and another gentleman, in the sight of the duke, the Earls of Mar and Athole, with others his friends purposely assembled: his sword in his hand, drawn; the king fearfully offering to withdraw himself into the queen's chamber, which before was devised to be kept shut against him. Howbeit, as upon short conference between the king and the earl a little apart, they soon grew to an accord. . . So he confessed to me, that, imme-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 25th July 1593. Ibid., another letter, same day, same to the same.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., John Carey to Burghley, August 1, 1593.

diately after this pacification, the king used all means, rough and smooth, to sound and pierce him thoroughly: what favours have been done him; what sums of money sent him; what promises made him; what advice or direction given him from her majesty or council, or other English, to get access in court to possess the king. Whereunto the earl made answer by utter denial, saving that her highness had a princely commiseration of his distressed estate, so far only as to yield him to take the benefit of the air of her country for preservation of his liberty and life, so narrowly sought by the king; so directly and cruelly by his adversaries. . . The king, with marvellous vehemency, insisted long upon that point, and eftsoons conjured him, 'by all the faith he bare him, by all the allegiance he owed him, by all the love he professed to him, by all the favour he hoped for ever to find of him, that he should not conceal Elizabeth's dealings from him; being,' as he said, 'a matter so manifest.' But," continued Dr Toby to Burghley, "the more violently the king sought to sift him, the more resolute was the earl, not only peremptorily to disclaim every particular thereof, but in sort, as he could, to charge the king with much unkindness and unthankfulness causelessly to carry such jealousy and suspicion of her majesty, who had hitherto been so gracious a lady, yea, a very mother unto him; and, under the providence of God, the only supporter of his estate that ever he found, or is like to find upon earth. 'Now hear, O Francis!' quoth the king, 'and have you then so soon forgotten my dear mother's death?' 'In good faith,' quoth the earl, as he saith, 'if you, my liege, have forgiven it so long since, why should not I forget it so long after; the time of revenge being by your own means, and not mine, so far gone by. A fault can but have amends, which her majesty hath made you many ways; and so hath she made me amends of all amisses, this once for all; to whom, with your pardon, sir, I will ascribe not only my lands and living, but my life, with liberty and honour, which is most of all, not only as freely bestowed upon myself, but extended to all mine and my posterity: so as it shall never be seen or heard that ever Earl Bothwell, for all the crowns of France, for all the ducats in Spain, for all the siller and gold in the Indies East and West, for all the kingdoms in Europe, Africa, and Asia, shall utter one word in council, or bear arms in field, against the amity of the two realms and princes, and the religion now by them authorised. And farther, I make God a vow,' quoth he to the king, 'that if ye, King Jamie, yourself, shall ever prove false to your religion, and faith to your God, as they say the French king hath done to his shame and confusion, I shall be one of the first to withdraw from your majesty, and to adhere to the Queen of England, the most gracious instrument of God, and the ornament of the Christian world.' From this he proceeded to the deposition of the Chancellor Maitland, upon whom he bestowed many an ill word and many a bad name; and answered the objection of subrogating Stewart in his room, (who is not as yet, but is likely to be;) undertaking confidently to assure, that whatsoever he had done heretofore, he should henceforth concur with her highness, as well as himself, in all things lawfully to be commanded. What party they are, as well the duke and earls as other lords and lairds of most commandment, he saith your lordship shall from him receive, in a catalogue subscribed with their own hands, by Mr Lock, whom these two days he hath looked for and mervaileth not a little at his uncoming. The earl doth purpose to follow him soon after that he shall have undergone his trial for the witchcraft, which is now instant. The considerations whereof are, as he pretendeth, the only cause of absenting himself out of Scotland until the very day; lest, having now the king in his power, it should hereafter be objected, that in the proceedings thereof, he had done what himself listed. His lordship did earnestly require me, moreover, because

Mr Lock was not yet come, to remember your lordship to take order that the union intended by her majesty, between the Popish and Protestant parties in Scotland, be not overhastily prosecuted, lest the multitude of the one may in time, and that soon, wreck the other, being fewer in number, and so become rulers of the king. . . His lordship acknowledged he hath now in Edinburgh and Holyrood House, of his own pay, a thousand soldiers, whereof the greater part are good musketeers, besides fifty horse to attend the king's person. . . . He maketh no question but by her majesty's assistance, whereupon he seemeth willing, wholly to depend, he shall be, with his friends and followers, sufficiently able to manage the estate about the king, to the peace of both realms, against all the forces and frauds of Spain. . . .

"This nobleman," so the dean concluded his letter to Burghley, "hath a wonderful wit, and as wonderful a volubility of tongue as ability and agility of body on horse and foot; competently learned in the Latin; well languaged in the French and Italian; much delighted in poetry; and of a very resolute disposition both to do and to suffer; nothing dainty to discover his humour or any good quality he hath. Now, as your lordship is like to hear of all these and many other particulars more at large, as the king's affection to the Lady Morton's daughter, and a strange letter written to some such effect, with some good assurance taken to bring a greater estate there into their association, and unto her majesty's devotion: so, since I was importuned thus far to lend him mine ear, and to relate his discourse to your lordship with what fidelity and celerity I could, I am most humbly to beseech your lordship, that in case it be not lawful (as in mine own poor opinion it is nothing convenient) for me to have talk with him or any from him, your lordship will vouchsafe so much to signify unto me by your 'honourable letter,' or otherwise, with expedition; lest by him, or some of his, I be driven to this pressure, in a manner, whether I will or no."[1]

Immediately after this visit of Bothwell to the dean, Mr Lock, the envoy of Elizabeth, who had organised the conspiracy which had thus placed James in the power of his enemies, arrived from Scotland; and by him Bothwell sent the following letter to the English queen:—

"MOST RENOWNED EMPRESS,—The gracious usage of so clement a princess towards me in my greatest extremity should most justly accuse me of ingratitude, if (being in the place wherein a little more than before I might) I should not perform those offices which then I did promise. So have I directed the bearer hereof to impart the same unto your majesty with more certainty than before; to whom, as I have [promised,] so did I move my associates in all points to ratify my speeches; and, by their oaths in his presence, confirm the same. So, fearing to offend your most royal ears, having in this, so in all other things, imparted my full mind to this bearer, whom I doubt not your highness will credit, my most humble and dutiful service being remembered, and your highness committed in the protection of the Eternal, after most humble kissing of your most heavenly hands, most humbly I take my leave."[2]

Having despatched this superlative effusion of flattery to his renowned empress, Bothwell addressed a few lines to the grave Burghley, thanking him for his "fatherly advices;" promising all grateful obedience, and signing himself his loving son.[3] He then collected from his friends on the Border six couple of hounds and some excellent horses, as a conciliatory present to the Scottish king;[4] and re-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Dr Tobias Mathews to Burghley, August 2, 1593.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Earl of Bothwell to the Queen. Endorsed in Burghley's hand, *Earl Bothwell to the Q. Maj. by Lock*, August 4, 1593.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bothwell to Burghley, August 1593.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., John Carey to Burghley, August 1, 1593. Also ibid., B.C., Sir William Reid to Burghley,

turned to stand his trial for witchcraft, which had been fixed for the 10th of August.

Meanwhile, the royal captive had not been idle. Although surrounded by his enemies and strictly watched, he contrived to receive messages from Huntly, who was mustering a large force in the north; and secretly communicated with Lord Hume and the Master of Glammis on the best way of making his escape. He was assisted in this by three gentlemen of the house of Erskine, who had been permitted to remain about his person. They employed two others of his attendants, named Lesley and Ogilvy; and it was resolved that a rescue should be attempted immediately after the trial of Bothwell, when the king was to pass over the Forth from Holyrood to Falkland. A fleet horse was to be ready at the park gate; James, eluding his guards, was to mount and gallop to Lochleven; whilst Hume, with all his forces, making an onset on the opposite faction, who had been assembled for the trial in the capital, hoped either to seize their leaders or put them to death.[1] All these preparations were managed by the king with such accomplished dissimulation, that he completely blinded Bothwell and his associates.

The trial now came on, and lasted from one in the forenoon till ten at night. In the indictment the earl was accused, on the evidence of several depositions made by Richard Graham, who had been burnt for witchcraft, of three several attempts against the king's life and estate: one by poison; another by fabricating a waxen image in the likeness of the monarch; and the last, by enchantments to prevent his ever returning out of Denmark. The poison was compounded, according to the declaration of the wizard, of adders' skins, toads' skins, and the *hippomanes* in the head of a young foal; and was to be placed where it might ooze down upon the king's head where he usually sat, a single drop being of such devilish and pestilent strength as to cause instant death. The defence of the earl was conducted by Craig, the famous feudal lawyer, who contended that Graham's various depositions were not only inconsistent and contradictory in themselves, but refuted by the declarations of his miserable sisters in sorcery, Sampson, Macalzean, and Napier; whilst he proved, by unexceptionable evidence, that Graham had been induced to accuse Bothwell under a promise of pardon signed by the king's counsel, and from the terror of being tortured. The earl also defended himself with much spirit and eloquence, and the result was his triumphant acquittal; which, considering the strength of his party at this moment, would probably have been the issue had he been as guilty as he really appears to have been innocent.[2]

All this took place on the 10th. On the 11th, the plot laid for the king's escape was to be carried into effect; and at three in the morning of that day, everything was in readiness. William Lesley, one of the gentlemen of the bedchamber, carrying with him the king's ring and a letter for Lord Hume, was passing as silently as he could through the courtyard; when Bothwell, who slept in the palace, was awakened by the watch, who suspected some secret practice, and rushing down seized the messenger, found on his person the king's letter and signet, and discovered the whole. The rest of the gentlemen were then arrested and delivered to the guard; and the earl, repairing to the king, who was by this time making ready to take horse, interdicted the journey, and charged him with his breach of promise. A stormy interview ensued. James insisted that he would ride to Falkland: Bothwell assured him that he should not leave the palace till the country was more settled. "You and your fellows," said James, have broken your pro-

11th August 1593; and ibid., B.C., Sir John Foster to Burghley, August 20, 1593.

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, August 11, 1593.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Mr John Carey to Burghley, August 12, 1593.

mises, imprisoned my servants, and now think to hold me a captive. Where are the three Erskines? where is Gilbert Ogilvy? where the faithful Lesley? Did ye not swear that I should return, after the trial, to Falkland; and that you, Bothwell, should withdraw from my company as soon as you were cleared by an assize?" "And so we shall," replied the Earl. "But first, my liege, we must be relaxed from the horn, restored to our lands and offices, and see the foul murder of the Earl of Moray punished. They who slew him are known; they, too, who signed the warrant for the slaughter, the Chancellor Maitland, Sir George Hume, and Sir Robert Melvil." "Tush, tush!" said the king; "a better man than you, Bothwell, shall answer for Sir Robert."—"I deny that," instantly retorted Bothwell; unless the man you mean is your majesty himself." This was a home-thrust, for it had been long suspected that the king was indirectly implicated in the fate of Moray; and when the earl proceeded to charge the Erskines with the conspiracy for escape, nothing could equal James's indignation, and all hopes of a reconciliation seemed at an end.[1] It was in vain that the ministers of the Kirk were summoned to promote peace: they prevailed nothing; and, as a last resource, Bowes the English ambassador was called in. With matchless effrontery he declared his mistress's astonishment at the enterprise of Bothwell; regretted the facility with which so treasonable an invasion had been pardoned; and expressed her anxiety for the safety of the king's person, and the preservation of the country from rebellion. James answered, that it was not for him to answer for the enterprise of Bothwell. He was no accomplice, but its victim; and for the traitors who now kept him, they had forsworn themselves, and broken every promise. Was he not prevented from free access to his own palace of Falkland? Had they not imprisoned five of his servants, and demanded the trial of the chancellor, the Master of Glammis, and Sir George Hume? and when he asked why, insolently answered, that they might be hanged.[2] But let them look to themselves. He might seem in a helpless state; but he was their king: and sooner would he suffer his hand to be cut from his wrist than sign any letter of remission at their imperious bidding; sooner endure the extremity of death, than consent to live a captive, and in dishonour. Bowes assured him of his mistress's sympathy; advised an amicable settlement; and at last, after two days' labour, with the assistance of some mediators selected from the ministers, the judges of the Session, and the chief magistrates of the city, succeeded in bringing the parties to an agreement.

During the whole of these conferences, the king appears to have behaved with such unwonted spirit and resolution, that it is evident he must have been assured of a large party, and of near and speedy succour. He declared, in sharp terms, to the ministers of the Kirk, that he would either be once more a free monarch, and released from these traitors, or proclaim himself a captive: and he charged them, on their allegiance, to let his mind be known to his people; to exhort them to procure his delivery by force; and to assure them he would hazard his life to attain it.[3] When Athole proposed himself to be appointed lieutenant-governor in the north, with full power against Huntly, and Bothwell claimed the same high office in the south, James, almost with contempt, refused both the one and the other; but he consented to pardon Bothwell and his associates, for all his attempts against his person; and agreed that Lord Hume, the Chancellor Maitland, the Master of Glammis, and Sir George Hume, should not repair to court till the conclusion of the parliament, which was to meet within

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, August 16, 1593.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, August 16, 1593.

[3] Ibid.

a month or six weeks at Stirling.[1] Nothing, however, was farther from the king's intention than the fulfilment of these promises, which he knew he could at any future time disregard and pronounce invalid, as extorted by force; and before such time arrived, he hoped to be able to muster a party which might defy his enemies, and secure that revenge which was only to prove the deeper, because it was dissembled and deferred. Meanwhile, with that elasticity and levity with which he could cover his gravest purposes, he resumed his gaiety, partook of a banquet at Bothwell's house in Leith, appeared wholly bent on his pastime, and rode to Inchmurrin to hunt fallow-deer.[2]

CHAPTER VIII.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1593—1594.

In the late revolution James had exhibited unusual firmness; and this last compromise with Bothwell was almost a victory. Nor was he deceived in his expectations of still farther triumph over this insolent noble, whom he now justly regarded as the leader of the English party and of the Kirk. The resolution and courage which the king had exhibited, convinced his turbulent barons that he was no longer a minor, or a puppet, to be tossed about from faction to faction, and made the helpless and passive instrument of their ambition. Many of them, therefore, began to attach themselves to the royal faction, from self-interest rather than loyalty; and however fatal to the peace of the country, the deadly feuds which existed amongst the nobles, by preventing combination, formed the strength of the monarch at this moment. It was evident that Bothwell had either deceived Elizabeth or himself, when he spoke to Carey and Mathews of his overwhelming strength, and the facility with which he could guide the government of Scotland according to the wishes of his renowned empress. Already his ally, the Duke of Lennox, young, capricious, and a favourite of James, began to waver; and before the appointed convention met at Stirling on the 9th of September, a powerful reaction had taken place, which no efforts of English intrigue could arrest. It was in vain that Elizabeth, Burghley, and Sir Robert Cecil his son, who now acted as a chief counsellor in all "Scottish causes," exerted themselves to keep up a faction, and even entered into a secret communication with Huntly and the Popish party, in the vain hope of bringing about a coalition between them and Bothwell. The effort to join with the Roman Catholics, whom they had so often stigmatised as enemies to the truth, only served to shew the fraud and falsehood of Elizabeth's and Cecil's constantly repeated assertion, that they were guided solely by zeal for the glory of God and the interests of the true religion; and Bowes the ambassador assured them, that if the plot for this unnatural combination went forward, the ministers of the Kirk, from whom it could

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Accord betwixt the King of Scots and Earl Bothwell, August 14, 1593.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, August 16, 1593.

not be concealed, would "greatly start and wonder hereat."[1] Besides, how was he to reconcile the course now recommended with his instructions to prosecute the Papistical rebels? How could he allow Huntly's uncle, a priest and a Jesuit, to steal quietly out of Scotland, and yet satisfy the Kirk and the Protestant leaders, that he (Bowes) was an enemy to the idolaters? All this needed to be reconciled and explained; and he begged for speedy directions.[2]

We have seen how completely Bothwell had been supported and encouraged in his late audacious and treasonable enterprises by the English queen. He was now to feel the fickleness of her favour: and with that deep hypocrisy which so often marked her political conduct, she addressed a letter to the King of Scots, and instructions to Bowes, in which she stigmatised the Scottish earl as guilty of an abominable fact, which moved her utmost abhorrence; and expressed her unfeigned astonishment, that any subject who had acted thus insolently, had not only escaped without chastisement, but had received, as it appeared, a remission of such atrocious conduct. She alluded also, with scorn and indignation, to his refusal to prosecute those "notable traitors of the north," Huntly, Errol, and Angus, "who had conspired among themselves, and agreed to admit great forces of strangers to enter into his realm, to the ruin of his estate and the subversion of religion;" and she warned him that such sudden changes as had been brought to her ears, such capriciousness and imbecility of judgment, would end not only in the loss of his liberty, but might endanger his life.[3] It did not suit James's policy or circumstances to tear the veil from these pretences at this moment; and, indeed, we are not certain that, however he may have suspected Elizabeth's double-dealing, he had detected it with anything of the certainty with which we can now unravel her complicated intrigues. At all events, he chose to fight her with her own crafty weapons, and pretended to Bowes that he was fully satisfied with her late assurances of friendship. When the appointed convention assembled at Stirling, Bothwell was commanded to absent himself from court until the meeting of parliament, which was fixed for the 14th of November; at which time the king intimated his intention of granting him a full pardon and restitution to his estates and honours, upon his submitting himself to the royal mercy.[4] He was then to leave the realm, but enjoy his revenues in his banishment; and his accomplices in his late treasons were to be pardoned.

Such terms, with which the rebel earl was compelled to be contented, exhibited a wonderful and rapid change in the power of the king; and all perceived where James's strength lay, when Lord Hume, with the Master of

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 6th September 1593. As this fact is new, and shews the insincerity of Elizabeth and Burghley, and the sincerity and honesty of the Kirk, proving also that Bothwell's party was the party of the Kirk, I give the passage from Bowes's letter.

"The party employed to sound Chanus [Huntly] and his compartners, how they stand affected to proceed in and perform their offers made for America, [England,] letteth me know that he hath spoken with Chanus, and with such as tendered this offer for him and the rest; and that they will go forwards agreeable to the motions offered. For the which this party thus travelling herein hath promised to go forwards in his course with diligence, as all things may be effected with best expedition and secrecy, likeas it will be made known, I trust, to your lordship, very shortly. I understand perfectly that Chanus [Huntly] will both impart to Petrea, [King of Scots,] and also communicate to his partners, whatsoever shall be concredited to his trust and secrecy; and I believe, verily, that his partners binding up with Argomartes, [Bothwell,] shall acquaint him therewith. Further, this cannot be kept from the ears of the vi m £86£6 [Kirk] here, who will greatly start and wonder hereat. Therefore I beseech your lordship that this may be well considered." Bowes very naturally goes on to observe, that this course of friendship with the Catholics is inconsistent with his instructions, which commanded him to prosecute the "Papistical rebels."

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, September 6, 1593.

[3] MS., State-paper Office, original draft of her majesty's letter to Mr Bowes, August 23, 1593.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 10th September 1593. Same to same, 15th September 1593.

Glammis, and Sir George Hume of Primrose Knowe, entered Stirling during the convention at the head of a large force. Everything was now changed, and the king spoke boldly out. He declared his resolution to cancel any promises extorted by force, when he was a captive; but promised mercy to all who repented and sued for pardon. He received Hume and his associates with open arms; sent for the Countess of Huntly to court; permitted the Catholic earls, Angus and Errol, to visit their friends without molestation; and, it was strongly reported, had consented to have a secret interview with Huntley at Falkland.[1] This northern earl had recently received great promises from Spain; and for the last eight months had maintained a large force, with which he had repeatedly ravaged the territories of his enemy Argyle, and kept the whole of that country in terror and subjection. This constant exercise in war upon a larger scale than was commonly practised in Highland inroads, had made him an experienced soldier; and James felt that, with such leaders as Huntley and Hume, he need not dread Bothwell, Athole, or their allies. All this rendered the king formidable; and soon after his triumph became complete by the arrival of his old and experienced councillor, the Chancellor Maitland, who, having been reconciled to the queen, the Master of Glammis, the Duke of Lennox, and his other enemies, rode to court, accompanied by young Cessford and two hundred horse.[2]

Measures now followed rapidly, of such a character as convinced the friends of England, the ministers of the Kirk, and the relics of Bothwell's party, that the king had not forgotten the late insults which had been offered him, and was preparing to take an ample revenge. Hume, a Roman Catholic, was made the captain of the king's body-guard; and, in the king's presence, openly threw out his defiance against Bothwell and the whole race and name of the Stewarts; who, he said, dared not take one *sillie bee* out of the moss in his bounds without his will.[3] In these sallies he was not only unchecked by the king, but James, calling for the ministers, insisted that the process of excommunication, which was then preparing against this potent baron, should be abandoned, alleging that he was in the progress of conversion. It was remarked, too, that the three Catholic earls, although still excluded from court, carried themselves with unwonted bravery and confidence. Angus, visiting Morton at the Newhouse in Fife, assured him that he had better join them in time, as their increasing strength would soon compel a union; and George Kerr, the victim of the Spanish Blanks, who had not been heard of since his escape from Edinburgh Castle, suddenly showed himself at Melvil, near Dalkeith, with a troop of eighty horse, and warned the tenants of Lord Ross to cease from their labour, if they would not have their houses burned above their heads. It will be remembered that Ross's men had assisted in the capture of Kerr; and their master, as was usual in those days, had been rewarded by a grant of Melvil, and other lands round Newbottle belonging to the Kerrs. These were trifling events; but noted at the time in the pulpit, when the watchmen of the Kirk were keenly detecting how the current of court favour was setting in towards Popery.[4]

There is no good ground for suspecting, notwithstanding the strong asseverations of the ministers to the contrary, that the King of Scots had ever any serious intentions of becoming a convert to the Roman Catholic faith, or even of permitting its public profession by any one of his subjects; but he was well aware of the unprin-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 15th September, 1593. Also, Ibid., B.C., Mr John Carey to Burghley, 13th Sept. 1593.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 21st Sept. 1593. Moyse's Memoirs, Bannatyne edition, p. 105.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, Sept. 13, 1593.

[4] Ibid., 5th October, 1593. *Supra*, pp. 187-189.

cipled policy of the English queen, which, from first to last, had been directed to weaken Scotland, by creating perpetual divisions amongst its nobles; and he had resolved, now that he was once more a free prince, and at the head of a strong party, to extinguish the fires which she had kindled, and restore, if possible, aristocratic union and general peace to the country. That such was his present object is evident from a passage in a letter of Mr Carey, the governor of Berwick, son of Lord Hunsdon, to Lord Burghley; and the fervent hope expressed by this English baron, that the day may never arrive which shall see the Scottish nobles "linked together in peace," is full of meaning. "For the news in Scotland," says he, "I know not well what to say; but this I am sure,—the king doth too much *appose*[1] himself to the Papist faction for our good, I fear. Yet here [he means in the border districts] is nothing but peace and seeking to link all the nobility together, which I hope will never be. The Papists do only bear sway; and the king hath none to put in trust with his own body but them. What will come of this your lordship's wisdom can best discern; and thus much I know certain, that it were good your lordship looked well whom you trust: for the king and the nobility of Scotland have too good intelligence out of our court of England."[2]

In prosecution of this design of a general union amongst his divided nobility, James opposed himself to the violent and persecuting measures of the Kirk. He knew the truth of what Bothwell had lately stated to Elizabeth, that the Scottish Catholics were so strong, that in the event of any attempt to unite them with the Protestants, they would soon rule all.[3] Since then, Huntley and his friends had been daily gaining complete pre-eminence in the north; and to render such a party furious or desperate by processes of treason and proscription, to discharge against them, if they did not choose at once to renounce their religion and sign the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, the sharpest arrows of civil and ecclesiastical vengeance, would have been the extremity of intolerance and of folly. The king wisely declined this, and persevered in his course; although the Presbyterian pulpits immediately opened their fire, and the provincial assembly of Fife was convened at St Andrews to consult on the imminent dangers which surrounded the Kirk.[4]

Of this religious convention Mr James Melvil, nephew of the well-known Andrew Melvil, was chosen Moderator; and Mr John Davison, the sternest and most zealous amongst his brethren, did not hesitate to arraign the pastors of the Kirk of coldness, self-seeking, and negligence. Let them repent, said he, and betake themselves to their ordinary armour—fasting and prayer. Let the whole Kirk concur in this needful humiliation. Above all, let the rebel earls, Huntley, Errol, Angus, Auchendown, and their accomplices, whom it were idle to assail with any lighter censures, be solemnly excommunicated; and let a grave message of pastors, barons, and burgesses, carry their resolution to the king, now so deeply alienated from the good cause: then they might look for better times. But now their sins called for humiliation; for they, the shepherds, seemed to have forgotten their flocks; they were idle and profane; nor would he be far from the truth, if he declared that a great part of their pastors were at this moment the merriest and the carelessest men in Scotland. After much debate, it was resolved that the Roman Catholic rebels should be excommunicated; and this upon the ground that many amongst them had been formerly students in the university of St Andrews, and must, therefore, have signed the Confession of Faith. The

[1] "Appose," (*ad-pono*, or *appono*,) place himself beside; assimilate himself to the faction.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Mr John Carey to Burghley, 29th September, 1593.

[3] MS., State-paper Office, B.C., Dean Toby Mathews to Lord Burghley, 2d August, 1593.

[4] MS. Calderwood, Sloan MSS. British Museum, 4738, fol. 1140, 26th September.

terms of this sentence, in which not the whole Presbyterian sect, as represented by the General Assembly of their Kirk, but an isolated provincial synod, took upon them to excommunicate certain members of the Catholic church, were very awful. This little conclave declared, that in name and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, they cut off the said persons from their communion, and delivered them to Satan, to the destruction of their flesh: it added,—that the Spirit might yet be safe, if it pleased God to reclaim them by repentance; but pronounced, if unrepentant, their just and everlasting condemnation.[1] This sentence was commanded to be intimated in every kirk in the kingdom. All persons, of whatever rank or degree, were interdicted from concealing or holding communication with the delinquents thus delivered to the devil, under the penalty of being visited by the same anathema; and the synod concluded by exhorting the pastors to whom the charge of the flock had been intrusted, to prepare themselves by abstinence, prayer, and diligent study of the Word, for that general and solemn fast which was judged most needful to be observed throughout the land. The causes for such universal humiliation and intercession were declared to be these:—[2]

1. The impunity of idolatry, and cruel murder committed by the Earl of Huntley and his complices.

2. The impunity of the monstrous, ungodly, and unnatural treasons of Huntley, Angus, Errol, the Laird Auchendown, Sir James Chisholm, and their accomplices.

3. The pride, boldness, malice, blasphemy, and going forward of these enemies in their most pernicious purpose, arising out of the said impunity, and their sufferance by the king; so that now they not only have no doubt, as they speak plainly, to obtain liberty of conscience, but also brag to make the Kirk fain to come to their cursed idolatry before they come to the truth.

4. The land defiled in divers places with the devilish and blasphemous Mass.

5. The wrath of God broken forth in fiery flame upon the north and south parts of the land with horrible judgments, both of souls and bodies, threatening the mid part with the like or heavier, if repentance prevent not.

6. The king's slowness in repressing Papistry and planting of true religion.

7. The defection of so many noblemen, barons, gentlemen, merchants, and mariners, by the bait of Spanish gain; which emboldeneth the enemies: and on the other part, the multitude of Atheists, ignorant, sacrilegious, blood-thirsty, and worldly outward professors, with whom it is a strange matter that God should work any good turn; the consideration whereof upon the part of man may altogether discourage us.

8. The cruel slaughter of ministers.[3]

9. The pitiful estate of the Kirk and brethren of France.

10. And Lastly. The hot persecution of discipline by the tyranny of bishops in our neighbour land.[4]

In addition to these bold proceedings, the leading ministers of the Kirk determined that Lord Hume, the captain of the King's Guard, should either satisfy the Kirk by his recantation, or be forthwith excommunicated. They publicly rebuked the Earl of Morton for keeping company with Errol and Angus, men branded by the Kirk as idolators; and when he defended himself by quoting the example of Henry the Fourth, the French king recently turned Catholic, they retorted that no Christian could, without error, associate with such delinquents.[5]

Meanwhile, Bothwell, instead of accepting the king's offered pardon and retiring from the realm, entered into

[1] MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1144.

[2] MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1142.

[3] Mr James Blyth and Mr John Aikman, ministers, had been slain by the Mures.

[4] MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1142.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 15th Sept. 1593. Also; Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, 26th Sept. 1593.

fresh intrigues with England and trifled with the royal mercy.[1] But James detected these new combinations; and marching suddenly in person with a strong force from Stirling to the Doune of Menteith, where Athole, Gowrie, and Montrose had assembled with five hundred horse, attacked their company, made Gowrie and Montrose prisoners, and had nearly taken or slain the northern earl, who fled at his utmost speed with a few attendants into Athole.[2]

The three Catholic earls, Huntley, Errol, and Angus, now earnestly supplicated the king, that they might be permitted to stand their trial for that conspiracy of the "Spanish Blanks," of which they solemnly protested their innocence. No opportunity, they said, had hitherto been given them of defending themselves before a jury. They had been excommunicated by the Kirk, banished from court, and compelled to lead the life of fugitives and traitors, without any evidence except a confession extorted by torture, and the exhibition of some signatures asserted to be theirs, but which they would prove to be forgeries. Let them only come to their trial. If found guilty, they were ready to suffer the penalty of their crimes; if acquitted, as they trusted to be, then they would either satisfy the Kirk on the subject of their religion, and conform to the national faith, or would go into voluntary banishment.[3] Not satisfied with these remonstrances, they suddenly presented themselves to the king as he rode from Holyrood to Lauder, and, falling on their knees, implored him to submit their alleged offences to the judgment of an assize. But James dismissed them with real or affected wrath, threatening that they should be worse handled for such boldness.[4]

Had the Catholic earls been sincere in the anxiety they expressed to have an impartial trial, it would have been the height of injustice to have refused their request; but it was well known that they had secretly summoned all their friends to assemble in arms on "their day of law;" and such was their present strength, that neither judges, jury, nor witnesses, could have attended with safety.[5] It is not surprising that the Kirk should have loudly remonstrated against such hurried and premature proceedings; and at an ecclesiastical convention of ministers, barons, and burghs, held at Edinburgh on the 17th October, for the purpose of considering the imminency of the threatened danger, they selected six commissioners to repair to the palace and present their advice, beseeching the king that the trial might be delayed till the "professors of the gospel should be ripely advised what was meetest for them to do, since they had resolved to be the principal accusers of these noblemen in their foul treasons." Amongst these commissioners is found an illustrious name, John Napier of Merchiston, the inventor of the logarithms. He had taken a leading part in this convention, and was at this time probably far better known for his espousal of the principles of the Kirk than for that profound genius which was to enlarge, by his wonderful discovery, the boundaries of science, and confer imperishable lustre upon his name.[6] His brother commissioners were, Mr James Maxwell of Calderwood, who along with Napier represented the barons; Mr James Melvile and Mr Patrick Galloway, ministers; and the two commissioners of Edinburgh and Dundee. These ecclesiastical commissioners were directed to remonstrate with the king against any premature trial of the Roman Catholic earls. They accordingly craved that such excommunicated and treasonable apos-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 15th Sept. 1593. James Sinclair and James Douglas of Spot to Bothwell, 1st Oct. 1593. Ibid., Lord Ochiltree to Bothwell, 4th Oct. 1593.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 5th Oct. 1593.

[3] Ibid. Oct. 9, 1593. [4] Ibid, Oct. 12, 1593.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 18th Oct. 1593.

[6] Memoirs of John Napier of Merchiston, by Mark Napier, Esq., his direct descendant, pp. 162, 163, 164. An interesting and valuable work, written by an old and much esteemed friend of the author.

tates should, "according to the loveable laws and customs of Scotland, be imprisoned till the estates of parliament had advised on the manner of their trial; that the jury should be nominated, not by the accused, but by the accusers; that as the foresaid traitors were excommunicated and cut off from the society of Christ's body, (to use the strong and revolting language of the original,) they should not be admitted to trial, or have any benefit of the law, till they were again joined unto Christ and reconciled to his Kirk." These, however, were not all the demands and proceedings of the Kirk. They resolved, that if their enemies attended in arms, they should meet them in the same fashion; desiring the king's permission that "the professors of religion may be his majesty's guard, and be admitted in the most fencible and warlike manner to be about the royal person, to defend it from violence, and accuse their enemies to the uttermost: and this," they added, "we are minded to do, although it should be with the loss of all our lives in one day; for certainly we are determined that the country shall not bruik us and them baith, so long as they are God's professed enemies."[1] In furtherance of these preparations, the Kirk directed the moderator of every presbytery to advertise each particular brother in the ministry within their bounds, to warn the noblemen, gentlemen, barons, and burgesses, to muster in warlike arms and array in Perth, on the 24th of the month, the expected day of trial; and appointed twelve ministers as commissioners, to be resident in the capital till the answer to their demand was returned by the king.[2] When the commissioners of the Kirk presented their petitions to James at Jedburgh, he refused to acknowledge any convention which had been summoned without his order; and after an angry interview, passed in mutual complaint and accusation, peremptorily declined returning any written reply to the Assembly. The state of matters now became alarming; and Bowes, the English ambassador, who watched it from hour to hour, wrote thus to Burghley on the 18th October:—"Yesterday, at the meeting of the commissioners of the Kirk, the barons and burghs convened here together. . . . . Great preparations are made for the advancement of the course thus resolved, and to stop the trial to be given at this time to these earls, whose friends (as it is told me) have mustered, and are in readiness to come to Perth at the day limited: they have already provided that the Water Gate, or Water Street, shall be reserved for the earls and their companies. But Athole, Gowrie, and many of the town, are rather disposed to keep them out. The convocation and access of people to that place is looked upon to be so great that thereon bloody troubles shall arise."[3]

A collision appeared now inevitable; and there were many causes which promised to make it, when it did occur, one of a fearful description. The opposite factions, whose partisans were flocking from all parts towards Perth, the anticipated scene of the trial, were animated by the most bitter and revengeful feelings; their blood was boiling under the influence of family feuds, religious persecution, and fanatical hatred. The advocates for peace were browbeaten, and their voices drowned in the din of arms and proclamations of mutual defiance; and all this was exasperated and increased by the warlike denunciations of the Kirk, which, by its thousand trumpet-tongues, through the length and breadth of the land, summoned all who loved the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to gird on their weapons, and, if necessary, die for their faith. Had things been allowed to continue in this state, and the muster taken place at Perth, a few days more might have kindled the flames of civil war in the country, and deluged it with

[1] MS., State-paper Office. Certain Petitions and Conclusions considered upon by the Commissioners for the Kirk, Barons, and Burgesses of Edinburgh, 17th Oct. 1593.

[2] Ibid.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 20th Oct. 1593.

blood; but at this crisis James wisely interdicted the trial from being held at Perth, and resolved that a solemn inquiry into the conduct of Huntly, Angus, and Errol should take place before commissioners to be selected from the nobility, the burghs, and the Kirk. To secure tranquillity, public proclamation was made, that none except such as were especially called for should presume to attend the convention: that the three earls, dismissing their forces, should await the king's determination at Perth; and that, in the mean season, none should molest them during the trial or inquiry which was about to take place. At all this the Kirk stood aghast. They had insisted on the imprisonment of the three earls. They had argued that, till they signed the Confession of Faith, and reconciled themselves to the Kirk, they could not be recognised or permitted to take their trial; that they ought to have no counsel to defend them; and that the Kirk, as their accuser, should nominate the jury. Its ministers now complained, threatened, and remonstrated;[1] but when the day appointed for the convention arrived, they found the king not only resolved to abide by his own judgment, but so strongly supported by the nobility whom he had summoned, that it would be vain to attempt resistance.

James, who had taken time to consider all coolly, on weighing the whole circumstances, found it necessary to steer a middle course. The trial was postponed, as it was believed that no jury could be found at that moment "so void of favour and partiality" as to condemn the earls; and, on the other hand, if acquitted, no terms or conditions could be imposed on them which their power would not enable them to despise and infringe.[2] As to the accused themselves: on the one hand, they persisted in asserting their innocence as to the "Spanish Blanks," which they were accused of having signed, or of any conspiracy to bring foreign forces into the realm; on the other, they confessed that they had received Jesuits, heard Mass, revolted from the Presbyterian faith against their public profession and subscription, refused to obey their summons for treason, and committed other acts against the laws, for which they were willing, they said, to put themselves in the king's mercy. All this was laid before a committee who represented the three estates — nobles, barons, and burghs; the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Mar appearing for the earls; the Lord Chancellor Maitland and Lord Livingstone for the lords, with whom sat all the councillors of estate; the barons being represented by four of their number, the burghs by five burgesses, and the Kirk by six of the leading ministers; who, however, appeared only as petitioners, and did not sit or vote as commissioners. After mature deliberation with this committee, the king, adopting, as far as he was permitted, a wise mean between the extremity of persecution recommended by the Kirk, and that toleration which was rather implored and hoped for than claimed as a right by the Catholics, pronounced his sentence. He declared, in this "act of abolition," as it was called, that he was firmly resolved that God's true religion, publicly preached, and by law established, during the first year of his reign, should alone be professed by the whole body of his subjects; and that all who had not embraced it, or who had made defection from it, should, before the 1st of February next, obey the laws by professing it, and thus satisfy the Kirk; or, if they found this against their conscience, should depart the realm to such parts beyond seas as he should direct, there to remain till they embraced the true religion, and were reconciled to the Kirk; but he added, that during this banishment they should enjoy their lands and living. As to those persons who had been accused of a treasonable conspiracy with Spain for the overthrow of the true religion—William earl of

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, Nov. 12, 1593. Also, same to same, 17th November, 1593.

[2] Ibid., 23d November, 1593.

Angus, George earl of Huntly, Francis earl of Errol, Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchendown, and Sir James Chisholm of Cornileys — he pronounced them "free, and unaccusable in all time coming of any such crimes:" and annulled all legal proceedings which had been instituted against them, unless they showed themselves unworthy of pardon by directly renewing their intrigues, or threatening, either by word or deed, any repetition of their treason. If they chose to renounce their idolatry, to embrace the Presbyterian opinions, satisfy the Kirk, and remain to enjoy their estates and honours within their own land, it was intimated to them, and to all other Catholics, that this must be done on or before the 1st day of February next; and, on the contrary, if they preferred to retain their faith and enter into exile, then they were to give assurance that, during its continuance, they should refrain from all practices with Jesuits or seminary priests against their native country. It was lastly declared, that they should express to the king and the Kirk their acceptance of one or other of these conditions before the 1st of February next.[1]

To our modern and more Christian feelings this sentence must appear as unwise as unmerciful; for it disavowed the possibility of toleration, held out a premium to religious hypocrisy, and punished sincerity and honesty of opinion with perpetual banishment. James had hoped that it might pacify the country; but it experienced the common fate of middle courses, and gave satisfaction to no party. The Catholics, who had never intermitted their intrigues with Spain, had lately received assistance and encouragement from that country; they commanded almost the whole of the north; and were in no temper to resign their religion, or retain it at the expense of perpetual exile. They temporized, therefore; affected a submission which they did not feel, and continued to strengthen themselves both at home and abroad for a new struggle. But if the Catholics were discontented, the Kirk received the act of abolition with mingled wrath and lamentation. It actually seemed to them an insufficient security, and a trifling punishment, that no man was to be permitted to remain within the realm, and enjoy his estate and the protection of the law, unless he signed the Presbyterian Confession of Faith. The profanation was, that any man should be at liberty to retain his belief in the Roman Catholic faith, and his Scottish estates, if he consented to banish himself from his native country. The feelings of the leaders of the Kirk upon this subject are thus described by Bowes, an eye-witness, in his letter to Burghley:—

"This edict, and act of oblivion, is thought to be very injurious to the Church, and far against the laws of God and this realm; whereupon the ministers have not only openly protested to the king and convention that they will not agree to the same, but also, in their sermons, inveigh greatly against it; alleging that, albeit it hath a pretence to establish one true religion in the realm, yet liberty is given to all men to profess what they list, so they depart out of the realm; and thereby they shall enjoy greater privileges and advantages than any other good subject can do. That this is very dangerous to the religion, and to all the professors thereof, that the crimes of these offenders shall be thus slightly passed over; and this notwithstanding their treasons and faults are so manifest and odious, as the king once confessed that he had not power to pardon them, and promised, as he was a Christian prince, to punish them with all rigour. And the parties thus offending have now been detected four times, and escaped punishment for like treasons and conspiracies."[1]

At this convention the king, who now found himself strong enough to

[1] MS., State-paper Office. Act of the Convention at Holyrood House, 26th November, 1593; with Burghley's Notes on the margin. It is printed by Spottiswood, p. 400.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, December 2, 1593.

disclose his true feelings, exhibited the intensity of his wrath against Bothwell. It was in vain that the queen, and those nobles who had attached themselves to her service, interceded for the delinquent. He was commanded to leave the realm within fifteen days; and James refused to listen to any offers, or to hold out the slightest hopes of forgiveness, till this order had been obeyed. The friends of the rebel earl were treated with equal severity. Lords Doune and Spiny, with Mr John Russell, an eminent advocate who had pleaded his cause, were imprisoned; and it was evident that all hope of reconciliation must be abandoned.[1]

The act of oblivion proved as distasteful to Elizabeth as it was to either the Catholics or the Kirk. This great princess had recently received intelligence of the continued intrigues carried on by Jesuits and seminary priests in Scotland. One of these busy emissaries, Thomas Macquharry, a Scottish Jesuit, who had been employed by Lady Hume, and had carried on his secret practices in different parts of England, had been recently seized by Sir John Carey at Berwick. It was reported that another Scottish Jesuit, Mr James Gordon, with William Gordon of Strathdon, a brother of the Earl of Huntly, and four or five other Catholics, had passed over from Scotland to Dunkirk;[2] and Mr James Craig, a gentleman resident at Bourdeaux, wrote to his brother Mr Thomas Craig, the celebrated feudal lawyer, then an advocate at the Scottish bar,[3] that an army and fleet were being equipt in Spain, which were suspected to be destined for Scotland. Ireland continued to be the theatre of perpetual intrigue and commotion; and the English queen had taken the adoption of the Catholic faith by Henry the Fourth greatly to heart. She was, therefore, in a highly excited state when she received from Bowes, her ambassador, the news from Scotland; and lost no time in despatching Lord Zouch with a violent open remonstrance, and a letter of secret rebuke, written wholly in her own hand.[4] This last was in these nervous and scornful terms:—

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—To see so much, I rue my sight that views the evident spectacle of a seduced king, abusing counsel, and wry-guided kingdom. My love to your good and hate of your ruin, breeds my heedful regard of your surest safety. If I neglected you, I could wink at your worst, and yet withstand my enemies' drifts. But be you persuaded by sisters. I will advise you, void of all guile, and will not stick to tell you, that if you tread the path you chuse,[5] I will pray for you, but leave you to your harms.

"I doubt whether shame or sorrow have had the upper hand when I read your last lines to me. Who, of judgment, that deemed me not simple, could suppose that any answers you have writ me should satisfy, nay, enter into the opinion of any one not void of four senses, leaving out the first.

"Those of whom you have had so evident proof by their actual rebellion in the field you preserve, whose offers you knew then so large to foreign princes. And now, at last, when, plainest of all, was taken the carrier himself, confessing all before many commissioners and divers councillors; because you slacked the time till he was escaped, and now must seem deny it, (though all men knew it:) therefore, forsooth, no jury can be found for them. May this blind me that knows what a king's office were to do? Abuse not yourself so far. Indeed, when a weak bowing and a slack seat in government shall appear, then bold spirits will stir the stern, and guide the ship to greatest wreck'

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, December 2, 1593.

[2] Ibid., November 24, 1593. Also ibid., December 2, 1593.

[3] MS., State-paper Office. The clause in the letter of James Craig at Bourdeaux, to his brother, Mr Thomas Craig, advocate in Edinburgh.

[4] Camden, Elizabeth in Kennet, vol. ii.

[5] In the copy in the State-paper Office, "the path you are in."

and will take heart to supply the failure.

"Assure yourself no greater peril can ever befall you, nor any king else, than to take for payment evil accounts; for they deride such, and make their prey of their neglect. There is no prince alive, but if he shew fear or yielding, but he shall have tutors enough, though he be out of minority. And when I remember what sore punishment those so lewd traitors should have, then I read again, lest at first I mistook your mind; but when the reviewing granted my lecture true, Lord! what wonder grew in me that you should correct them with benefits who deserve much severer correction. Could you please them more than save their lives and make them shun the place they hate, where they are sure that their just deserved haters dwell, and yet as much enjoy their honours and livelihoods, as if for sporting travel they were licensed to visit other countries? Call you this a banishment—to be rid of whom they fear and go to such they love? Now, when my eyes read more, then smiled I to see how childish, foolish, and witless an excuse the best of either three made you, turning their treasons' bills to artificers' reckonings with *items* for many expenses, and lacked but one billet which they best deserved, an *item* for so much for the cord whose office they best merited. Is it possible that you can swallow the taste of so bitter a drug, more meet to purge you of them, than worthy for your kingly acceptance? I never heard a more deriding scorn; and vow that, if but this alone, were I you, they should learn a short lesson.

"The best that I commend in your letter is, that I see your judgment too good to affirm a truth of their speech, but that alone they so say. Howbeit, I muse how you can want a law to such, as whose denial, if it were ever, could serve to save their lives, whose treasons are so plain; as the messenger who would for his own sake not devise it, if for truth's cause he had it not in his charge; for who should ever be tried false, if his own denial might save his life? In princes' causes many circumstances yield a sufficient plea for such a king as will have it known: and ministers they shall lack none, that will not themselves gainsay it. Leave off such cloaks, therefore, I pray you; they will be found too thin to save you from wetting. For your own sake play the king, and let your subjects see you respect yourself, and neither to hide or to suffer danger and dishonour. And that you may know my opinion, judgment, and advice, I have chosen this nobleman, whom I know wise, religious, and honest; to whom, I pray you, give full credit, as if myself were with you; and bear with all my plainness, whose affection, if it were not more worthy than so oft not followed, I would not have gone so far. But blame my love if it exceed any limits. Beseeching God to bless you from the advices of them that more prize themselves than care for you, to whom I wish many years of reign."[1]

It was not to be expected that a letter like this, containing so much disagreeable advice and cutting sarcasm, and which in its involved, but often energetic and condensed periods, affords so good a specimen of Elizabeth's private epistolary style, should have been acceptable to James; but when Lord Zouch presented it at his audience on the 13th January,[2] the king dissembled his chagrin and received him with apparent courtesy. He professed his anxious desire to live on terms of amity with his good sister; observed, that as for the act of abolition to the Catholic earls, which her majesty disliked so much, it was now itself abolished by their not accepting it, and he was entirely free from any agreement. He knew, he said, in answer to Zouch's remonstrances on

[1] This interesting letter is now printed (for the first time) from the original, in the queen's own hand, preserved in the collections of Sir George Warrender. There is a contemporary copy in the State-paper Office.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, January 15, 1593-4. Ibid., Lord Zouch to Burghley. Also MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, D II. 169.

his supposed Spanish predilections, what it was to lose an old friend and to trust a new. As to the councillors, of whom she complained, he must confide in his council as she confided in hers; but he was the last who would suffer any ill affected to insinuate themselves amongst his ministers.[1]

With these general assurances, Elizabeth's ambassador would not be satisfied. He called on the king for deeds, not words; insisted that his royal mistress was entitled to have an express written declaration of the course which the king was determined to follow with the rebel earls and the Catholic party, still busy in their plots for the invasion of England and the destruction of their common faith;[2] and lamented, in his letter to Lord Burghley, that he was utterly unfit to cope with the difficulties which met him on every hand. The Lord Chancellor Maitland, whom he was taught to consider the wisest and most upright of the king's councillors, plotted, as he suspected, against him; and had received, it was said, great sums of money from the Catholic faction. He was surrounded by falsehood and suspicion; distracted by contrary reports; and so strictly watched, that none came near him but those whom the king permitted.

All this, however, did not prevent Zouch from fulfilling the more secret part of his instructions; nor, although he affected to be deeply shocked with the political profligacy and dissimulation of the Scottish nobles, was he himself by any means a novice in intrigue. Whilst assuring James of Elizabeth's unshaken friendship and zeal for his welfare, he opened a communication with his bitter foe, the fierce and reckless Bothwell; and arranged with this earl, John Colvile, brother of the Laird of Wemyss, Henry Lock, an agent of Sir Robert Cecil, and some of the most violent ministers of the Kirk, a new plot for the surprise of the king. It was resolved that Athole and Argyle, with the whole strength of the north, should advance to Edinburgh; form a junction with the forces of Bothwell, Montrose, Ochiltree, and the Laird of Johnston; and attacking the Chancellor Maitland, Lord Hume, and the friends of the king, at once destroy Huntly and the Roman Catholics, save James from evil counsellors, and take an ample revenge for the murder of the Earl of Moray.[3] These designs were the more unjustifiable at this moment, as the monarch had adopted strong measures against the Roman Catholic earls. He had declared them excluded from all benefits of the act of abolition;[4] had summoned them, on the penalty of being outlawed, to deliver themselves up, and take their trials for treason; called a parliament, which was to be held in April; appointed a new council of more neutral and well-affected nobles and barons; and had professed to Elizabeth, in a written answer to Zouch's instructions, his continued desire of friendship and good faith. In an interview, also, which Bowes the resident ambassador had with James's great adviser the Chancellor Maitland, the Scottish lord assured him that his royal mistress need not distress herself with suspicions of his master. He was steadfast, he affirmed, in his religion, whatever Papists or the Kirk might affirm: nothing would induce him to embrace the Spanish courses; and for an invasion of England, he knew it would be madness.[5] Yet Zouch continued his plots; and

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lord Zouch to Burghley, January 15, 1593-4. Also ibid., same to the same, January 26, 1593-4.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, January 27, 1593-4. Also ibid., B.C., Mr John Carey to Burghley, January 25, 1593-4.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lord Zouch to Burghley, January 15, 1593-4. Also MS., British Museum, Caligula, D II. 151. Instructions for Lord Zouch for treating with certain lords in Scotland.

[4] Supra, p. 210.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, January 8, 1593-4. Ibid., same to same, January 15, 1593-4. Also ibid., same to same, January 20, 1593-4. Also MS., State-paper Office, "Councillors newly established by the King of Scots," January 17, 1593-4, in Burghley's handwriting. Also ibid., Bowes to Burghley, January 20, 1593-4. Also British Museum, Caligula, D II. 169, 182.

Elizabeth undoubtedly gave them her secret encouragement; although, with her usual caution and parsimony, she abstained from any large advances either in money or troops.

In the midst of these intrigues and dangers a joyful event occurred. The queen brought forth a son, her first child, in the castle of Stirling, on the 19th of February; and the monarch immediately committed the charge and government of the infant heir to the throne to the Earl of Mar, captain and keeper of the castle of Stirling; "whose uncle and goodsire, [it is stated in the act of appointment,] by three descents together, have had the custody and governance of the sovereign princes of this realm."[1] By the nation this event was hailed with universal joy; an old chronicle declaring that "the people, in all parts, appeared to be daft for mirth."[2] But scarcely was the child born ere he became a mark for treachery; the conspirators proposing to Lord Zouch, that when they advanced on Stirling, they should strengthen their hands by seizing the infant heir to the crown, and thus extort better terms from the king. It was a game which had already been played in the days of James the Third. The English ambassador, however, protested against such an outrage, and his associates did not dare to disobey.

All was now ripe for Bothwell's attempt; but the king proved too crafty and strong for his adversaries. He had received secret information of the plot; seized a gentleman of Zouch's suite, who had communicated with the traitors; commanded Lord Hume, Cessford, and Buccleuch, to concentrate their strength at Kelso, where it was expected the enemy would cross the Border; imprisoned some of the boldest and busiest ministers of the Kirk; and addressing the people in the High Church of Edinburgh after the sermon, informed them in stirring terms, of the insolence of Bothwell, that audacious rebel, who was at that moment on his way to attack his lawful prince; declared his resolution to lead his whole force in person against him; and, raising his hand to heaven, took a solemn vow to God, that if they, for their part, would instantly arm and advance with him into the field, he, for his, would never rest till, in return for such service, he had utterly suppressed and banished the Catholic lords from his dominions.[1] Scarcely had James ended this appeal, when word was brought that Bothwell, who had out-manœuvred Hume and Buccleuch, was at hand, at Leith, with six hundred horse, awaiting the junction of Athole and Argyle, whom he expected to cross the Forth with their northern strength, and shewing intentions of intrenching himself within the old fortifications on the Links. Without a moment's delay, the king assembled his troops, and marched against him. The advance consisted of a thousand pikemen and five hundred horse; the rear, of the infantry of the city of Edinburgh, in number about a thousand musketeers; and besides these, there were three guns covered by a body of two hundred horse. Despairing of being able to withstand such a force within the intrenchments, Bothwell retired deliberately, and in good order, in a south-easterly direction, round the roots of the hill of Arthur Seat, towards Niddry, where he halted on a neighbouring field, which offered him an excellent position. James, observing this movement, now dreaded an attack of his capital on the south side, where it was undefended; and ordering Hume at the head of the cavalry, to advance to Niddry, countermarched through Edinburgh, and took up his ground with the remainder of the troops on the Borough Muir. Meanwhile, Hume and Glammis had reached a hill beside Niddry, and were hesitating to make the onset, when Bothwell, Lord Ochiltree, and the gentlemen with them, "after prayers on their knees," assailed them with loud shouts of "God and the Kirk," drove them from their ground, slew twelve

[1] MS., State-paper Office, February 21, 1593. Lord of Mar anent the keeping of the young Prince.

[2] Moyse's Memoirs, p. 113.

[3] Historie of James the Sext, p. 304.

of their troopers, and chased them to within a short distance of the spot where the king stood. They then sounded their trumpets, and retired in good order by Craigmillar without losing a man. In this onset, Bothwell took Hume's cornet and trumpet, to whom he gave his liberty; and presenting him with two rose nobles, sent by him a challenge to his master.[1] This defeat took place on an eminence beside Niddry, called Edmeston Edge.[2] Bothwell now retreated to Kelso; and, aware of the hopelessness of his enterprise, soon after dispersed his company, and became once more a refugee in England.

The king, delivered for the present from all apprehensions on this quarter, now determined to fulfil his promise, and deprive the Queen of England and the ministers of the Kirk of all pretence of opposition, by adopting the most vigorous proceedings against the Catholic earls, Huntley, Angus, and Errol. Proclamation was made, that these noblemen should appear and take their trial before the parliament to be held in May. The whole force of his realm was summoned to meet him in arms, to be led against the rebels if they resisted; and Colvile of Easter Wemyss, one of the best military leaders then in Scotland, with Mr Edward Bruce, an influential minister of the Kirk, were dispatched on an embassy to Elizabeth. The general object of their mission was to assure her of their master's resolute determination to reduce the Catholic earls, and for ever put an end to the Spanish intrigues; but before proceeding to any other point, they were enjoined to remonstrate, in the strongest terms, against the support lately given in England to the king's avowed rebel, the Earl of Bothwell. We have seen the bitter and sarcastic letter which Elizabeth, three months before, had sent to the king by the Lord Zouch. It was now his time to reply to it, and have his revenge; which he did by the following private epistle, intrusted to his ambassadors, written wholly in his own hand, and certainly not inferior, either in irony or vigour, to the production of his good sister:

"So many unexpected wonders, madam and dearest sister, have of late so overshadowed my eyes and mind, and dazzled so all my senses, as in truth I neither know what I should say, nor whereat first to begin: but thinking it best to take a pattern of yourself, since I deal with you, I must, repeating the first words of your last letter, (only the sex changed,) say I rue my sight that views the evident spectacle of *a seduced queen*. For when I enter betwixt two extremities in judging of you, I had far *rathest* interpret it to the least dishonour on your part, which is ignorant error. Appardon me, madam; for long approved friendship requires a round plainness. For when first I consider what strange effects have of late appeared in your country; how my avowed traitor hath not only been openly reset in your realm, but plainly made his residence in your proper houses, ever plainliest *kything*[1] himself where greatest confluence of people was; and, which is most of all, how he hath received English money in a reasonable quantity; waged both English and Scottish men therewith; proclaimed his pay at divers parish churches in England; convened his forces within England, in the sight of all that border: and therefrom contemptuously marched, and camped within a mile of my principal city and present abode, all his trumpeters, and divers waged men, being English; and being by myself in person repulsed from that place, returned back in Eng-

[1] We learn from Henry Lock's letter to Sir Robert, describing the "raid," and written from Berwick only two days after the action, that before they charged their adversaries, Bothwell and his companions exclaimed, that "that day her Majesty should see proof of their intentions and faith." MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Henry Lock to Sir R. Cecil, April 5, 1594. By a letter from Bowes to Burghley of April 13, 1594, State-paper Office, and another, of the same date, from Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, we learn, that the management of Scottish affairs, owing to the increasing infirmities of Lord Burghley, had been intrusted, by the Queen, to his son Sir Robert Cecil, one of the privy-council.

[2] Moyse's Memoirs, p. 115.

[1] Kything himself; *showing himself.*

land with displayed banners; and since that time, with sound of trumpet, making his troops to muster within English ground: when first, I say, I consider these strange effects, and then again I call to mind, upon the one part, what number of solemn promises, not only by your ambassadors, but by many letters of your own hand, ye have both made and reiterated unto me, that he should have no harbour within your country; yea, rather stirring me farther up against him, than seeming to pity him yourself; and upon the other part, weighing my desires towards you,—how far being a friend to you I have ever been an enemy to all your enemies, and the only point I can be challenged in, that I take not such form of order, and at such time, with some particular men of my subjects as peradventure you would, if you were in my room; when thus I enter in consultation with myself, I cannot surely satisfy myself with wondering upon these above-mentioned effects: for to affirm that these things are by your direction or privity, it is so far against all princely honour, as I protest I abbor the least thought thereof. And again, that so wise and provident a prince, having so long and happily governed, should be so fyled and contemned by a great number of her own subjects, it is hardly to be believed; if I knew it not to be a maxim in the state of princes, that we see and hear all with the eyes and ears of others, and if these be deceivers, we cannot shun deceits.

"Now, madam, I have refuge to you at this time, as my only pilot to guide me safely betwixt this *Charybdis and Scylla*. Solve these doubts, and let it be seen ye will not be abused by your own subjects, who prefer the satisfying of their base-minded affections to your princely honour. That I wrote not the answer of your last letters with your late ambassador, (Lord Zouch,) and that I returned not a letter with him, blame only, I pray you, his own behaviour; who, although it pleased you to term him wise, religious, and honest, had been fitter, in my opinion, to carry the message of a herald, than any friendly commission betwixt two neighbour princes: for as no reason could satisfy him, so scarcely could he have patience even to hear it offered. But if you gave him a large commission, I dare answer for it he took it as well upon him: and therefore have I rather chused to send you my answer by my own messengers. Suffer me not, I pray you, to be abused with your abusers; nor grant no oversight to oversee your own honour. Remember what you promised by your letter of thanks for the delivery of O'Rorick. I trust you will not put me in balance with such a traitorous counterpoise, nor willingly reject me; constraining me to say with Virgil—

Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.

And to give you a proof of the continuance of my honest affection, I have directed these two gentlemen unto you, whom I will heartily pray you to credit as myself in all they have in charge; and because the principal of them goes to France, to return the other back with a good answer with all convenient speed."[1]

This spirited remonstrance had the best effect upon Elizabeth, who, although she had encouraged Bothwell in his late audacious attempts, never felt much scruple in discarding an unsuccessful instrument. She was, accordingly, all smiles to the ambassadors, when, in their master's name, they invited her to stand godmother at the approaching baptism of the infant heir to the Scottish throne; and although her countenance changed when they spoke of money and the necessities of their master, yet even on this point, Bruce, before his return, received a more favourable answer

[1] Printed for the first time from the Warrender MSS. The letter is dated Edinburgh, April 13, 1594. In an interesting volume, presented by Adam Anderson, Esq., Solicitor-General for Scotland, (an old and valued friend of the author,) to the Abbotsford Club, will be found, pp. 6, 7, James's letter of credential to his ambassadors, Bruce and Wemyss, with a letter from the king to the Earl of Essex, bespeaking his good offices.

than he had expected. She assured him that she would extend her liberality the moment the king set out on his expedition against the Catholic earls, and she saw that he was in earnest.[1] Colvile of Easter Wemyss, his brother ambassador, now proceeded to the court of France; whilst, about the same time, Sir William Keith was dispatched to the United Provinces; and Mr Peter Young, the king's almoner, to the court of Denmark. The object of all these missions was the same: to carry to the king's faithful and ancient allies the happy news of the birth of a prince; to invite them to send their representatives to the baptism, which had been fixed for the 15th of July; and to hint delicately to the United States, but in perfectly intelligible terms, the necessity of presenting, at that solemn ceremony, something more substantial than congratulations.[2]

Important events now crowded rapidly on each other. On the 30th of May the estates assembled; and as James's avowed determination to concentrate his whole strength against the Catholic earls had conciliated the Kirk and the English faction, all proceeded amicably and firmly. Huntley, Angus, and Errol, the three mighty leaders, who were now in open rebellion, were forfeited, stript of their estates, declared traitors,[3] and a commission given to their avowed enemy, the young Earl of Argyle, to assemble the forces of the north, and pursue them with fire and sword. All persons detected in saying Mass, were ordered to be punished capitally, and their goods confiscated. It was resolved, for the preservation of the religion, and to confirm the amity between the two realms, that there should be a thorough reformation in the king's council; and that Elizabeth's advice should be followed in such matters. The Catholic Countess of Huntley, whose intercourse with the king and queen had been a constant thorn in the side of the Kirk, was dismissed from court; Lord Hume recanted, and signed the Confession of Faith, either convinced in conscience, or terrified by impending severities; and the king declared, that immediately after the baptism, he would march in person, at the head of the whole strength of his dominions, against the Catholic insurgents.[4]

On the evening of the 27th August, the Earl of Sussex, a young nobleman of the highest rank, and connected by blood with his royal mistress, arrived at the Scottish court. He came from Elizabeth to stand her gossip, or representative, at the baptism of the young prince. He was attended by a noble retinue, and brought some rich presents from the Queen of England, with this brief letter of congratulation and counsel:—

"I make a note of my happy destiny, my good brother, in beholding my luck so fortunate as to be the baptizer of both father and son, so dear unto me; and [this] makes me frame my humble *orisons* to Him that all may,[5] that He will please bless with all happiness the prosperous continuance of both, in such a sort as my benedictions bestowed on either may be perfected through His omnipotent graces; and do promise a grant to my devotions, springing from a fountain of such good will. And pray you believe, that I never counsel or advise you aught whose first end tends not to your most good; and do conjure you, that receiving so assured knowledge of what your lewd lords [she alludes here to the Catholic earls] mean, that you neglect not God's good warning, to cause you timely shun the worst. All kings have not had so true espiars of their harm, but have felt it or they heard it; but

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr Edward Bruce to Lord Burghley, May 16, 1594.

[2] Warrender MS. Collections, vol. A. p. 109. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, April 13, 1594. Also, ibid., same to same, April 21, 1594. Also, ibid., original draft, Sir R. Cecil to Sir R. Bowes, May 17, 1594.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, May 30, 1594. Ibid., same to same, June 9, 1594.

[4] M.S. State-paper Office, Act of Secret Council, July 23, 1594.

[5] To Him that can do all things.

I am best testimony of you to too many fortellers, in whom you never yet found guile.[1]

"Thus will I end to trouble you with ragged lines; saving to request you bear with the youth of this noble earl, in whom, though his years may not promise him much, yet I hope his race and his good nature will afford your honourable regard, both for his parentage, and being of my blood, as coming from such a prince, of whom you may make surest account, to be assured such as you could wish, as God can best witness: to whom I pray you to grant you always victory of your evil subjects."[2]

When Sussex delivered his letter and presents, the king was in the highest bustle and good humour; engrossed not only with the many weighty concerns connected with his approaching "Rode," or military expedition, but devising sports and pastimes for the entertainment of his foreign guests the ambassadors, and planning, with the Lord of Lindores and Mr David Fowler, his masters of the revels, a variety of princely pageants, with "deep moral meanings;" one of which, the interlude of "Neptune," was the fruitful product of his majesty's own private brain. The expense incurred in these triumphs and shows, in which there was an unusual allowance of chariots, mimic ships, Christian knights, rural deities, Moors, windmills, and amazons, must have been excessive, judging from the account of a contemporary pamphlet, written in the highest style of quaint and courtly composition.[3] The baptism itself took place on the 30th of August, in the Royal chapel at Stirling castle. The infant prince was carried by Sussex, Elizabeth's ambassador. He was christened by Cunningham, bishop of Aberdeen, by the name of Frederick Henry, Henry Frederick; and when the solemn ceremony was concluded, and the king, the ambassadors and nobles, with the queen and her ladies of honour, retired from the chapel to the hall of state, "the cannons of the castle roared, so that therewith the earth trembled; and other smaller shot," says one of the city orators of the time, "made their harmony after their kind." The infant was then knighted by his royal father, "touched with the spur" by the Earl of Mar; and being crowned with a ducal coronet, richly set with diamonds, sapphires, and other precious stones, Lion King of Arms proclaimed his titles as "The Right Excellent, High, and Magnanimous Frederick Henry, Henry Frederick, by the Grace of God, Knight and Baron of Renfrew, Lord of the Isles, Earl of Carrick, Duke of Rothesay, Prince and Great Steward of Scotland." The pageants succeeded; but their details would only fatigue. It is amusing to find that the king himself did not disdain to take a part, apparelled at all points as a Christian Knight of Malta; whilst a worshipful baron, the Lord of Buccleuch, with Lord Lindores and the Abbot of Holyrood, in women's attire and gallantly mounted, enacted three amazons. The ceremony being concluded, and the voice of revelry hushed in the palace, the Earl of Sussex, after a few days, took leave, bearing with him this letter from the king to his royal mistress. It is wholly written in James's hand:—

"I could not permit, madam and dearest sister, now after the ending of this solemn time, the nobleman bearer hereof to depart without returning with him unto you my most hearty thanks for the honouring me with so noble a substitute *gossip* in your place. And where ye excuse his youth, surely he was the fitter for a young king and feasting days. But I cannot aneuch[4]

[1] Obscure. Probably, "But I, in whom you never yet found guile, am the best amongst many forewarners."

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, August 27, 1594. Also, Royal Letters, State-paper Office, Copy of her Majesty's Letter to the King of Scots.

[3] State-paper Office. A rare pamphlet, entitled, "A True Report of the most Triumphant and Royal Accomplishment of the Baptism of the most Excellent, Right High and Mighty Prince, Frederick Henry, by the Grace of God, Prince of Scotland, solemnized August 30, 1594." Printed by Peter Short, for the Widow Butter. To be sold at her shop under St Austin's Church.

[4] *Aneuch*, Scottish for enough.

commend unto you his extreme diligence in coming, and courteous and mild behaviour here; which moves me to request you to cherish so noble a youth, now after his first employment.

"As for the other part of his commission and your letter, which concerns the Spanish lords here, ye can be no earnester now in that matter than I am, who has now renounced any further dealing with them but by extremity; and presently have I vowed myself only to that errand, and never to take rest until I put some end thereunto. And suppose ye may justly accuse (as ever ye do) my deferring so long to put order unto them; yet according to an old proverb, *it is better late thrive than never;* and surely I will think my fault the more excusable if the example thereof make you to eschew the falling in the like error, in making your assistance not to come as far behind the time as my prosecution does. But in this I remit you to your own wisdom; for you are not ignorant how occasion is painted. And now I cannot omit to lay before you some incident griefs of mine; but lest I weary you too much with my ragged handwrit, I remit the particulars hereof to the report of this nobleman, only touching thus far by the way. I think ye have not given commission to any of your council to treat with Bothwell's ambassador, nor yet allow that his agent, and one guilty of all his treasons, should use his public devotion in the French Kirk, in presence of my ambassador; who, indeed, was better furnished with patience at the sight thereof than he is likely to get thanks for at my hands: yet now, madam, none can brook me and Bothwell both. Examine secretly your councillors, and suffer them not to behave themselves more to your dishonour than my discontentment. Only *honestum utile est, præcipue regibus;* and if James Forret or any other *Bothwellist* be at present within your country, I crave, by these presents, delivery according to the treaties, your many hand-written promises, and my good deserts by O'Rorick. And thus not doubting, as it hath been your fortune to be godmother both to me and my son, so ye will be a *good mother* to us both, I commit you, madam and dearest sister, to the protection of the Almighty."[1]

For these suspicions of James there was too much ground; as it is certain that Sir Robert Cecil, who, on account of the increasing infirmities of his father Lord Burghley, now managed the Scottish affairs, had secret intelligence with Bothwell. The Catholic earls were now alluring this audacious man, by Spanish gold, to make common cause with them against the Scottish king. Bothwell, on the other hand, with consummate baseness, had proposed to Cecil to accept the money and betray their secrets to the Queen of England, if she would still stand his friend in his present distress and misery. But he was no longer the proud and powerful partisan whom Elizabeth had once so highly favoured; and the moment she discovered that James had detected his intrigues, she threw him from her with as much indifference as she would a broken sword; commanded him to leave her dominions; and interdicted her subjects, under the severest penalties, from giving him harbour or assistance. He was no longer permitted, in the strong language which the king himself used in his remonstrance to Sussex, to "tak muster, display cornet or ensign, blaw trumpet, strike drum," or even in any way live and breathe within England.[2]

Having secured this expulsion of his mortal enemy, James assembled a convention at Stirling,[3] and made the most active preparations for the attack of the Catholic earls. On both sides a violent and determined struggle was anticipated; as there were many

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Royal Letters, James to Elizabeth, September 11, 1594, Holyrood. Printed for the first time.

[2] Ibid., Mr John Colvile to Sir R. Cecil, whom he addresses as "his honourable Lord and Mæcenas," July 31, 1594. Also ibid., Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, August 3, 1594. Also ibid., Royal Letters, "The effect of the King of Scots' Speech to the Earl of Sussex." 1594.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Earl of Sussex to Sir R. Cecil, September 8, 1594.

deep feelings and bitter passions which festered in the minds of the leaders and their hosts. With the Kirk, it was a war of religious persecution, or rather extermination. Their avowed object was to depose *antichrist*, and to compel all Catholics to recant, or at once give up their lands, their honours, and their country, for their privilege to adhere to that Church which they believed to be of divine origin and the only depository of the truth. But to these feelings were added, as may be easily imagined, many motives and passions of baser alloy: ambition, love of plunder, deep feudal hatred, long-delayed and fondly-cherished hopes of revenge; and all that catalogue of dark and merciless passions which spring from the right of private war and the prevalence of family feuds. These all raged in the bosoms of the opposed leaders and combatants; and the exacerbation they produced was shewn alike by the energy of their preparations and the cruelty with which they fought. Huntly, Angus, Errol, and Auchendown, since their refusal of the act of abolition,[1] had been gathering their strength, and were now busily engaged in levying recruits, partly at their own charges, partly with Spanish gold, of which they had received repeated supplies. It had been now for many years the practice of Elizabeth, with the permission of James, to employ large bodies of Scottish auxiliaries in her wars in the Low Countries. Scottish troops, also, often served in Ireland; and the Highland chiefs had long driven a lucrative and warlike commerce with that country, selling their services to the highest bidder, and carrying over large bodies of pikemen, bowmen, and even of hagbutteers, to the assistance of Elizabeth or her enemies, as it best suited their interest. From these causes, there were now in Scotland many experienced officers and numerous bands of mercenaries, ready, like the Italian *Condottieri*, or the Swiss bands, to offer their service wherever they heard the tuck of drum or the clink of gold; and as Huntly had high reputation as a military leader, lived in almost regal splendour in his palace at Strathbogie, and was young, generous, and brave, the Catholic camp was in no want of recruits, and soon assumed a formidable appearance. He was now also joined by Bothwell, who, driven to desperation by the mortal hatred of the Scottish king; his recent proscription by the Queen of England; his desertion by the Kirk, who had detected his dealings with the Catholics; and the hunting down, torturing, and execution of his poor vassals, had been unable to resist the bribes held out to him. The papers still exist which enable us to trace the last struggles and plots of this desperate man; but we can only give them a passing glance. It was arranged between him and his new associates, that when Huntly was engaged in the north, Bothwell should make a diversion in the south; thus distracting the king and dividing his forces. But this was not all. He entered into an agreement with his new friends, in which it was proposed, by a sudden *coup de main*, to attack the court, imprison the king, seize the infant prince, murder Sir George Hume the king's favourite; and, as he himself expressed it in his letter to the ministers of the Kirk, "*put in practice the loveable custom of their progenitors at Lauder*," by completely revolutionising the government.[2] It was asserted, and on good grounds, that the usual "Band," or feudal agreement in such conspiracies, was drawn up and signed by the *enterprisers*; but the time for its execution was not fixed; and the seizure of some of the inferior agents, with the course of events in the north, happily rendered the whole plot abortive.

These events were of a stirring and romantic kind; for, on the 21st September, Argyle, having received the royal commission to pursue Huntly and his associates, set out on his expedition at the head of a force of six thousand men. Of this army, three

[1] *Supra*, p. 210.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bothwell to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, September 7, 1594.

thousand only were chosen men, bearing harquebuses, bows, and pikes; the rest being more slenderly equipt, both as to body-armour and weapons. Of cavalry, he had few or none; but he expected to be joined by Lord Forbes, with the Laird of Towey, the Dunbars, and other barons, who, it was hoped, would form a strong reinforcement, and be mostly mounted.[1] It had been the king's intention to postpone the attack upon the insurgent barons till he had assembled the whole force of his realm, and was ready to take the command in person. But the ministers of the Kirk urged the danger of delay: some of them even buckled on their broadswords and rode to the camp; whilst Argyle himself, young, (he was only nineteen,) ardent, and acting under the stimulus of personal revenge, determined on instant action. He had already, he said, been twice on the eve of marching, and twice been countermanded; but now the slaughter of his brother-in-law, the Earl of Moray, should be avenged on Huntly; to whom he sent a message that, within three days, he meant to sleep at Strathbogie. To this taunting challenge Huntly replied, that Argyle should be welcome: he would himself be his porter, and open all the gates of his palace to his young friend; but he must not take it amiss if he rubbed his cloak against Argyle's plaid ere they parted.[2]

On advancing to Aberdeen, Argyle ordered Red Lion, the herald, to proclaim the royal commission by sound of trumpet in the market-place, and appointed Sir Lauchlan Maclean of Duart to the chief command under himself. He was joined by the Macintoshes, the Grants, the Clan Gregor, the Macgillivrays, with all their friends and dependants, and by the whole surname of the Campbells; with many others, whom either greediness of prey or malice against the Gordons had thrust into that expedition. These, including the rabble of camp-followers, or, as Bowes terms them, "*rascals and poke-bearers*," formed a body of ten thousand strong. But of this number only six thousand were fighting men; and out of these there were not above fifteen hundred disciplined harquebusiers, chiefly serving under Maclean; the rest being promiscuously armed with dirks, swords, dags, Lochaber axes, two-handed swords, and bows and arrows. He had neither cavalry nor artillery; and a large part of his force was totally regardless of discipline, disdaining command, composed of chieftains and people distracted by old feuds and suspicions, marching, as described by an eye-witness, "at raggle and in plumps, without order." The earl had also along with him a noted sorceress, whose incantations, in the superstitious spirit of the times, were expected to bring to light the treasures which might be hid under ground by the terrified inhabitants.[3] With this army Argyle proceeded into Badenoch, and besieged the castle of Ruthven, belonging to Huntly; but the place was bravely defended by the Macphersons. He had no means of battering the walls; and abandoning the siege, he led his troops through the hills to Strathbogie. It was his purpose to ravage this country, which belonged to Huntly, with fire and sword; and thence come down into the Lowlands to form a junction with Lord Forbes, who, with his own kin and the Frasers, Dunbars, Ogilvies, Leslies, and others, were at that moment on their way to meet him. With this object, he arrived on the 2d of October at Drimmin in Strathdown, where he encamped;[4] and soon after received news that Huntly and Errol were in the neighbourhood, and proposed to attack him, in spite of their great inferiority in force. The disparity was indeed great; for the Catholic earls could not muster above fifteen hundred, or, at most, two thousand men. But of these the greater part were resolute and gallant gentle-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, September 27, 1594.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, September 28, 1594. Historie of James the Sext, p. 339.

[3] Napier's Life of Napier of Merchiston, p. 217.

[4] Warrender MSS., vol. B. p. 9.

men, all well mounted and fully armed; and amongst them some officers of veteran experience, who had served in the Low Countries. They had, besides, six pieces of ordnance, which were placed under the charge of Captain Andrew Gray, who afterwards commanded the English and Scottish auxiliaries in Bohemia.[1]

On the morning of the 3d of October, Huntly, who had marched from Strathbogie to Auchendown, the castle of Sir Patrick Gordon, having received word by his scouts that Argyle was at no great distance, sent Captain Thomas Kerr, a veteran officer, at the head of a small body of cavalry, to view the enemy and report their strength. In executing this, he fell in with Argyle's "spials," and slew them all except one, who brought him to the vicinity of their encampment, which was near Glenlivat, in the mountainous district of Strathavon. On his return, Captain Kerr concealed the number of their opponents, affirming that a few resolute men might easily have the advantage; and Huntly, following his advice, instantly marched forward. Errol led the advance, supported by Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchendown, the Lairds of Gicht, Bonniton Wood, and Captain Kerr and three hundred gentlemen. Huntly commanded the rearward, having on his right the Laird of Clunie-Gordon, on his left Gordon of Abergeldie, and the six pieces of artillery so placed as to be completely masked, or covered, by the cavalry, so that they were dragged forward unperceived within range of the enemy's position. They then opened their fire; and on the first discharge, which was directed at the yellow standard of Argyle, struck down and slew Macneill, the Laird of Barra's third son, one of their bravest officers, and Campbell of Lochnell, who held the standard. This successful commencement occasioned extraordinary confusion amongst the Highlanders, to many of whom the terrible effects of artillery were even at this late day unknown; and a large body of them, yelling and brandishing their broadswords and axes, made some ineffectual attempts to reach the horsemen; but receiving another fire from the little ordnance-train of Captain Gray, they took to flight, and in an incredibly short time were out of sight and pursuit. Still, however, a large body remained; and Argyle had the advantage not only of the sun, then shining fiercely in the eyes of his opponents, glancing on their steel coats and making the plain appear on fire, but of the ground: for his army were arrayed on the top of a steep hill covered with high heather and stones, whilst the ground at the bottom was soft and mossy, full of holes, called in that country peat-pots, and dangerous for cavalry. But all this did not deter Huntly's vanguard, under Errol and Auchendown, from advancing resolutely to the attack. Errol, however, dreading the marsh, made an oblique movement by some firmer ground which lay on one side, and hoped thus to turn the flank of the enemy; but Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchendown, urged on by his fiery temper, spurred his horse directly towards the hill, and getting entangled with his men in the mossy ground, was exposed to a murderous fire from the force under Maclean of Duart. This chieftain was conspicuous from his great stature and strength; he was covered with a shirt of mail, wielded a double-edged Danish battle-axe, and appears to have been a more experienced officer than the rest; as he placed his men, who were mostly "harquebusiers," in a small copse-wood hard by, from which they could deliver their fire, and be screened from the attack of cavalry. Auchendown, nevertheless, although his ranks were dreadfully thinned by this fire of the enemy's infantry, managed to disengage them, and spurring up the hill, received a bullet in the body, and fell from his horse; whilst his companions shouted with grief and rage, and made desperate efforts to rescue him. The Highlanders, however, who knew him well, rushed in upon him,

[1] Warrender MSS., vol. B. p. 9. In which there is a minute contemporary account of the battle of Glenlivat.

dispatched him with their dirks, and, cutting off his head, displayed it in savage triumph: a sight which so enraged the Gordons, that they fought with a fury which alike disregarded discipline and life. This gave an advantage to Maclean, who, enclosing the enemy's vanguard, and pressing it into narrow space between his own force and Argyle's, would have cut them to pieces had not Huntly come speedily to their support and renewed the battle; attacking both Argyle and Maclean with desperate energy, and calling loudly to his friends to revenge Auchendown. It was at this moment that some of the Gordons caught a sight of Fraser, the king's herald, who rode beside Argyle, and was dressed in his tabard, with the red lion embroidered on it, within the double tressure. This ought to have been his protection; but it seemed rather to point him out as a victim: and the horsemen shouting out, "Have at the Lion," ran him through with their spears, and slew him on the spot. The battle was now at its height, and raged for two hours with the utmost cruelty. Errol was severely wounded with a bullet in the arm, and by one of the sharp-barbed arrows of the Highland bowmen, which pierced deep into the thigh. He lost his pennon or guidon also; which was won by Maclean. Gordon of Gicht was struck with three bullets through the body, and had two plaits of his steel coat carried into him; wounds which next day proved mortal. Huntly himself was in imminent danger of his life; for his horse was shot under him, and the Highlanders were about to attack him on the ground with their knives and axes, when he was extricated and horsed again by Innermarkie; after which he again charged the enemy under Argyle, whose troops wavered, and at last began to fly in such numbers that only twenty men were left round him. Upon this the young chief, overcome with grief and vexation at so disgraceful a desertion, shed tears of rage, and would have still renewed the fight, had not Murray of Tullibardine seized his bridle and forced him off the field. Seeing the day lost, Maclean, who had done most and suffered least in this cruel fight, withdrew his men from the wood, and retired in good order; but seven hundred Highlanders were slain in the chase, which was continued till the steepness of the mountains rendered further pursuit impossible. Such was the celebrated battle of Glenlivat. The loss on Huntly's side was mostly of gentlemen, of whom Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchendown, his uncle, "a wise, valiant, and resolute knight," was chiefly lamented. Besides him, twenty other gentlemen were slain, and some forty or fifty wounded; but the victory was complete, and recalled to memory the bloody fight of Harlaw, in 1411, between the Earl of Mar and Donald Balloch; in which, under somewhat similar circumstances, the superior armour and discipline of the Lowland knights proved too strong for the ferocious but irregular efforts of a much larger force of Highlanders.[1]

During these transactions, the king, unconscious of this reverse, had left his palace at Stirling, and advanced with his army to Dundee, where Argyle, in person, brought him the news of his own defeat. James, however, was more enraged than dismayed by this intelligence. He had left his capital so well defended[2] that he dreaded nothing from Bothwell. He knew that, from the exhausted state of the country, it would be impossible for Huntly to keep his forces together; and he swore that the death of a royal herald, who had been murdered with the king's coat on, should be avenged on these audacious rebels. Nor did he fail to keep his promise. In spite of the severity of the season, he advanced with his army to Aberdeen, attended by Andrew Melvil and a body of the ministers of the Kirk, who, with the feeling that this was a

1 The above account of the battle of Glenlivat is taken chiefly from the original letters of Bowes, who was on the spot.

2 MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, October 3. Ibid., October 8. Ibid., October 12, 1594.

crusade against the infidels, had joined the camp, and loudly applauded the meditated vengeance of the monarch.[1] He thence pushed on to Strathbogie. This noble residence of Huntly,[2] which had been fourteen years in building, was blown up with gunpowder, and levelled in two days, nothing being left but the great old tower, whose massive masonry defied the efforts of the pioneers; whilst its master, deserted by his barons and dependants, fled into the mountainous parts of Caithness.[3] James had been much incensed against him by the scornful contents of an intercepted letter written to Angus, in which Huntly spoke of the king's rumoured campaign as likely to turn out a "*gowk's storm*."[4] Slaines in Buchan, the principal castle of Errol, who still lay languishing from his wounds; Culsamond in Garioch, the house of the Laird of Newton-Gordon; Bagays and Craig in Angus, the castles of Sir Walter Lindsay and Sir John Ogilvy, successively shared the fate of Strathbogie. Indeed, there is little doubt that the royal severity, whetted by the exhortations of Andrew Melvil, who bore a pike and joined the soldiers in the destruction of Strathbogie, would have fallen still heavier on this devoted district, had not famine, and the remonstrances of Thirlstane and Glammis, compelled the king to fall back upon Aberdeen.[5] Here, after the execution of some of Huntly's men, he published a general pardon to all the commons who had been in the field at the battle of Glenlivat, upon their payment of the fines imposed by the council.[6] He then appointed the Duke of Lennox to be his lieutenant or representative in the north, assisted by a council of barons and ministers. Amongst the civilians were the Earl Marshal, Lord Forbes, Sir Robert Melvil, and Sir John Carmichael, with the Lairds of Dunipace, Findlater, and Balquhan; whilst of the ministry, were Mr David Lindsay, Mr James Nicolson, Mr Peter Blackburn, Mr Alexander Douglas, and Mr Duncan Davison. A charge was next given to the barons and gentlemen who resided north of the river Dee, to apprehend all the rebels within their boundaries; and although in the greatest possible distress for money to pay his troops, the king, who trusted to the solemn promises of Elizabeth, made an effort to keep them together, and left behind him a body of two hundred horse, and one hundred foot, under the command of Sir John Carmichael. These were ordered to assist the Duke of Lennox, whose residence was to be in Aberdeen, Elgin, or Inverness, until Argyle, who had been appointed by James to the permanent government of the north, should assemble his friends and relieve him of his charge. Meanwhile, the Duke was empowered to hold Justice Ayres, or courts for the punishment of offenders; and the barons and gentlemen of the north bound themselves, before the king's departure, in strict promises of support.[7] Having completed these judicious arrangements, the monarch disbanded his forces, and returned to Stirling on the 14th November.[8]

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, October 23, 1594.

[2] Ibid., B.C., Carey to Sir R. Cecil, November 18, 1594. "The castle and palace of Strathbogie clean cast down and brent." Also, ibid, Occurrents, Oct. 29, 1594.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, October 29, 1594. Ibid. MS., State-paper Office, Occurrents, October 28 and 29.

[4] "Gowk" is the Scottish word for the "Cuckoo." An April storm.

[5] MS., State-paper Office, November 3, 1594, Occurrents certified from Aberdeen.

[6] MS., State-paper Office, Occurrents, November 3, 1594.

[7] MS Books of the Privy Council of Scotland, November 7, 1594. MS., State-paper Office, Occurrents sent from Aberdeen, November 8, 1594.

[8] MS., State-paper Office, Abstract of Letters from Edinburgh, November 16, 1594.

CHAPTER IX.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1594—1597.

JAMES had now fulfilled all his promises to Elizabeth; and by the severity with which he had put down the rebellion of the Catholic earls, had more than fulfilled the expectations of the Kirk. The castles and houses which were said to have been polluted by the Mass, were smoking and in ruins;[1] the noblemen and gentry, whose only petition had been that they should be permitted to retain their estates, and have their rents transmitted to them in the banishment which they had chosen rather than renounce the faith of their fathers, were fugitives and wanderers, hiding in the caves and forests, and dreading every hour to be betrayed into the hands of their enemies.[2] All this had been accomplished at no little personal risk, for the king was surrounded by perpetual plots against his liberty, and sometimes even against his life.[3] He had cheerfully undergone great privations, had impoverished his revenue, incurred heavy debts, and imposed burdens upon his subjects, that he might, by one great effort, extinguish the Catholic faith, destroy the hopes and intrigues of Spain, and relieve the Queen of England from all her fears. He had done this, trusting to her promises of that pecuniary aid which was absolutely necessary for the payment of his troops; and before he set out, had dispatched his secretary, Sir Robert Cockburn, to the English court,[4] with the perfect confidence that everything which had been undertaken by "his good sister" would be fulfilled.

In this, however, he was miserably disappointed. Whilst the king was engaged in burning and razing the houses of the Catholics, Elizabeth and the now venerable Burghley were closeted at Greenwich, laying their heads together to find out some plausible excuse for stopping the payment of the promised supplies. Cockburn, the ambassador, was artfully detained and delayed from week to week, and month to month, till the result of the campaign could be guessed with some certainty. When this was ascertained, the sum of two thousand pounds, for which an order had been given, was recalled;[5] and a paper was drawn up by Lord Burghley, detailing the sums paid by England to James since the year 1586, and proving, to the perfect satisfaction of Elizabeth, if not of James, that instead of any money being then due to the King of Scotland, he had been overpaid to the extent of six thousand five hundred pounds.[6] This, the queen added, was at the rate of three thousand pounds a-year; which James could hardly complain of, as it was the exact allowance given both to her sister Mary and herself by their father Henry the Eighth; and yet the Scottish king now pretended that she had promised an annuity of four thousand pounds, which she positively denied.

For this unwise and double conduct in the queen there could be no defence. She had first excited James

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir R. Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, Sept. 28, 1594.

[2] MS., State-paper Office, Bowes, Oct. 29, 1594.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, October 7, 1594. Also, ibid., Occurrents, November 8, 1594, and November 16, 1594.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir R. Cockburn to Sir R. Cecil, Sept 16, 1594.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir R. Bowes to Burghley, Oct. 23, 1594.

[6] Ibid., B.C., Scottish Payments, Nov. 5, 1594. The endorsation is in Burghley's hand.

to this northern expedition by flattery and large promises of support; she now forgot all, and deserted him without scruple or remorse. Such a mode of proceeding roused his passion to a pitch of unusual fury: and when Sir R. Cockburn returned, the storm broke pitilessly on his head. The king at the same time expressed, in no moderate terms, his rage and suspicion against Burghley and Sir Robert Cecil, by whose advice Elizabeth had acted; and some busy courtiers blew the coals, by assuring him that both father and son were involved in the intrigues and treasons of Bothwell. Had the queen kept her promises, (so he said,) had she not thrown to the winds her solemn assurances made him by her ambassadors, Lord Burgh and Lord Zouch, the land would have been utterly purged of the enemies to God, religion, and both the countries. But now matters might proceed as they pleased. If the enemy revived: if they began again to look confidently for Spanish money, and Spanish messengers; if recruits were raised in the Isles to assist the Catholics and O'Neill in Ireland; if the rebel earls and Bothwell had met together as they were reported to have done; if, in his own council plots were being carried on in favour of the Catholics, and his own life were not safe from the efforts of desperate men, who had conspired to set up the young prince and pull him from his royal seat; all these manifold dangers and miseries were to be ascribed most justly to his desertion by Elizabeth. He had performed his part, and more than redeemed all the pledges which he had given. She had not only failed in all her promises, but now had the hardihood to disavow them, and she might take the consequences. If he was himself compelled to look to other friendships, and accept of other offers of assistance contrary to his own wishes; if the members of his council, who were inclined to the Catholic side, had now more to say than before; if at the moment when Spanish intrigues were about to be extinguished for ever, he was arrested in his course; all was her fault, not his.[1] He must now strengthen himself as he best could, and place no more implicit reliance upon English promises.

It was impossible to deny the justice of these complaints; and although for the moment all was quiet in the north under the government of the Duke of Lennox, there were many subjects for anxiety. The king's debts were enormous, and more money still was imperiously required to pay his troops and retain the advantages he had acquired. His late severities to the Catholic earls, and his alliance with the Kirk, the ministers of which now lauded as highly as they had vituperated him, had lost him the friendship of all his foreign allies, and of the influential body of the English Catholics; and within his own court and council there were so many rivalries and jealousies, so much plotting and intriguing, that, on his return, he found the campaign in the north almost less irksome than the civil battles he had to fight in his own palace. The great struggle was between the Lord Chancellor Maitland and the Earl of Mar. Maitland's faction was strong, embracing Hamilton, Athole, Hume, Buccleuch, Ogilvy, and many others. Mar, on the other hand, had the keeping of the prince, commanded the castles of Stirling and Edinburgh, and enjoyed the complete confidence of the king, who had become somewhat suspicious and impatient under the grasping and increasing power of the chancellor.

But James had another and nearer source of anxiety in the queen, who was equally the enemy of Mar and Maitland. This princess, for a considerable period after her marriage, appears to have shunned all interference with party or public affairs; but she was jealous of Maitland, who had opposed her marriage, and was said to have secretly attacked her honour; and of Mar, because her son, the young heir to the throne, had been committed in charge to him rather

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir R. Cockburn to Sir R. Bowes, December 12, 1594.

than to her. Besides, she and the king, though outwardly living on fair and decent terms, were neither loving nor confidential. James's cold temperament and coarse jokes disgusted the queen, who was not insensible to admiration; and she consoled herself, for the desertion of her lord, in the more attractive society of the young Duke of Lennox, the noblest of the Scottish courtiers. This, on the other hand, roused the royal jealousy; and about the time of the christening Mr John Colvile assured Sir Robert Cecil, whom he calls his most honourable lord and Mæcenas, that matters were on a very miserable footing. He writes as follows:—

"These few lines I thought meet only to put in your hands, to go no farther but to her majesty, and your most honourable father, my special good lord. It is certain that the king has conceived a great jealousy of the queen, which burns the more the more he covers it. The duke is the principal suspected. The chancellor casts in materials to this fire. The queen is forewarned; but with the like cunning will not excuse, till she be accused. '*Haec sunt incendia malorum;*' and the end can be no less tragical nor was betwixt his parents. The president of the Session, called the Prior of Pluscardine, is by her indirectly stirred up to counterpoise the chancellor, who she blames of all these slanders; and the chancellor is indirectly supported by the other; both the princes holding the Wolf by the ears."[1] We know also, from a letter of Mr James Murray, a gentleman of the bedchamber, that about this time a plot had been laid for the "disgrace of the queen and the Duke of Lennox; and to so bitter and mortal an excess had the king's fears and jealousy proceeded shortly before the baptism, that he had doubts as to the paternity of Prince Henry."[2] On the 30th of July, a month before the baptism, Colvile wrote thus to Sir R. Cecil: The "king repents him sore that he has made such convention to this baptism; for upon the jealousy mentioned in my last he begins to doubt of the child. I think he had not been baptised at this time if so many princes had not been invited. That matter takes deep root upon both sides.

Nocte dieque suos gestant in pectore fastus,
Incautos perdet tacita flamma duos."

It is possible that all this may have been much exaggerated by Colvile, and that Bothwell's gossip to the Dean of Durham, Toby Mathews, of the king's love for the beautiful daughter of the Earl of Morton, may have been equally highly coloured; but there can be little doubt that James and his royal consort were not on comfortable terms; and it seems certain that the queen, about this time, not only placed herself at the head of a faction which numbered in its ranks some of the most powerful nobles, but began to have considerable weight both in the court and with the country.

In the north, also, everything was in commotion; for although Lennox had, for a brief season, succeeded in restoring tranquillity, by the vigour with which he had executed the charge committed to him, all became again disordered on his retirement from office. The great cause of these excesses was to be traced to some extraordinary discoveries made at this time by the young Earl of Argyle, which showed that treachery, not cowardice, had been the cause of his defeat at Glenlivat. It was found out, by the confessions of some accomplices, that Campbell of Lochnell, the near relative of the young chief, and, failing an only brother, the heir to his estates and honours, had been tampering with Huntly; and that the flight of so large a body of Highlanders was only part of a conspiracy against the life of Argyle. It was discovered, also, by evidence which could not be contradicted, that this foul plot against the

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr John Colvile to Sir R. Cecil, July 26, 1594. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr James Murray to "Faithful Gawane," August 16, 1594.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, James Murray to his Faithful Gawane, August 16, 1594; and ibid., Mr John Colvile to Sir R. Cecil.

young earl was intimately connected with the late murder of the Earl of Moray and the assassination of the Laird of Calder; that all were branches of one great conspiracy, of which a chief contriver was Maitland the chancellor, assisted by Huntly, Duncan Campbell of Glenurchy, Archibald Campbell of Lochnell, Sir James Campbell of Ardkinglass, Macaulay of Ardincaple, and John Lord Maxwell. These titled and official ruffians, in the spirit of the times, which could combine the strictest legal precision with the utmost familiarity with blood, had drawn up a *band*, by which, in the most solemn manner, they became mutually bound to each other to achieve the murder of James earl of Moray, Archibald earl of Argyle, Colin Campbell of Lundy, his only brother, and John Campbell of Calder. The result was to be, the possession of the earldom of Argyle by Lochnell, and the appropriation of a large part of its princely estates by the Chancellor Maitland and the other conspirators. With the success of one part of this conspiracy, the cruel murder of the Earl of Moray, we are already acquainted;[1] and in the case of the Laird of Calder they were also successful: for this unfortunate gentleman was about this time shot at night, through the window of his own house in Lorn, by an assassin named M'Kellar, who had been furnished with a hagbut by Ardkinglass, which, to make surer work, he had loaded with three bullets. So far this diabolical plot was followed out with success. But at this crisis, the remorse or interest of Ardkinglass revealed the conspiracy to Argyle; and the apprehension, torture, and confession of John Oig Campbell and M'Kellar, who were executed, led, at last, to the revelation of the "Great Contract," as it was called. The "band" itself fell into the hands of Argyle, and convinced him that the assassination of his unhappy friends, Moray and Calder, was to have been followed, on the first good opportunity that should present itself, by the murder of himself. Of all this the consequences were dreadful. Argyle hurried to the north, assembled his vassals, and proclaimed a war of extermination against Huntly, and all who had opposed or deserted him at Glenlivat.[2] Huntly, on the other hand, having by this time somewhat recovered his recent losses, was once more in the field, and threatened to hang up any retainer of his, high or low, who dared to pay the fines levied on him, or sought for peace in obedience to the laws.[3] Mar, a nobleman very powerful in the north as well as the south, joined with Argyle; whilst Huntly had many friends at court, who secretly screened him in his excesses. The ministers of the Kirk, in the meantime, sounded their terrible trumpet of warning to all true men, denouncing from the pulpit the reviving influence of the Catholics; and large bodies of soldiers, disbanded for want of pay, roamed over the country, and committed every sort of robbery and excess. Ministers of religion were murdered; fathers slain by their own sons; brothers by their brethren; married women ravished under their own roof; houses, with their miserable inmates, burned amidst savage mirth; and the land so utterly wasted by fire, plunder, and the total cessation of agricultural labour, that famine at last stalked in to complete the horrid picture, and destroy, by the most terrible of deaths, those who had escaped the sword.[4]

Amidst these dreadful excesses, the only support of the country was in the energy of the king: for his council was torn by faction, and some of the chief dignitaries were the offenders. But although deserted by Elizabeth, and compelled to disband his troops, and relax his military efforts against the Catholics, James assem-

[1] *Supra*, p. 179.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir R. Bowes' Advertisements, sent him from Edinburgh, January 5, 1594-5. Gregory's History of the Western Highlands and Isles of Scotland, pp, 244, 250, 251, 253.

[3] MS Letter, State-paper Office, Advertisements by letters from Edinburgh, January 15, 1594-5.

[4] MS. Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4738, p. 1183.

bled a convention of his nobles; and evinced not only a sympathy for the sufferings of the people, but his resolution to make the utmost efforts to remove them.[1] Finding it impossible to reduce the northern districts to order without vigorous proceedings against the chiefs, he committed Athole, Lovat, and M'Kenzie, to ward at Linlithgow; imprisoned Argyle, Glenurchy, and others, in Edinburgh Castle; and confined Tullibardine, Grantully, and their fierce adherents, in Dumbarton and Blackness: to remain in this durance till they had made redress for the horrid excesses committed by their clansmen and supporters, and had come under an obligation to restore order to the country.[2] As to the Catholic earls, and Bothwell their associate, both parties, now nearly desperate of any ultimate success, and driven by the active pursuit of the king from one concealment to another, were anxious to reach the sea-coast and escape to the Continent. Bothwell especially, that once proud and potent baron, who had been the correspondent of Elizabeth, the friend of Burghley, the pillar of the Kirk, the arbiter of the court, and the idol of the people, was reduced to the lowest extremity. He had been expelled from all his castles and houses; and now the Hermitage, his last and strongest den, was in the hands of Hume, his mortal enemy.[3] Scott, the Laird of Balwearie, one of his chief friends, who was acquainted with the secrets of his recent conspiracy with the Catholic earls, was seized, and purchased his life by a full revelation of the plot. His brother, Hercules Stewart, suffered on the scaffold; and the Kirk branded him with excommunication. William Hume, the brother of Davy the Devil, or David Hume of Manderston, whom Bothwell had slain, was employed to trace the fugitive from cover to cover; and executing this service with a scent sharpened by revenge, he ran him through Caithness to the sea-coast; from which, after various windings and doublings, he escaped to France.[4]

Meanwhile, Huntly and Errol lingered in Scotland, with a last hope that assistance in money and in troops was on the eve of arriving from Spain; but this prospect was utterly blasted by a disaster which befell their messenger, Mr John Morton, a Jesuit, brother to the Laird of Cambo, who had been intrusted with a secret mission by the King of Spain and the Pope. This person had taken his passage in a Dutch ship, and was landed at Leith; but the disguise under which he travelled had not concealed him from a fellow passenger, a son of Erskine of Dun, who hinted his suspicion to Mr David Lindsay; and this active minister of the Kirk instantly pounced upon Father Morton, as he was called, who, in the struggle with the officers of justice, tore his secret instructions with his teeth.[5] The fragments, however, were picked up, joined together, their contents deciphered, and the king, who piqued himself upon his shrewdness in cross-examination, exerted his powers with much success. He brought Morton to confess that he was a Jesuit, though he appeared only a Scottish gentlemen seeking his native air for the recovery of his health; that he was confessor to the Seminary College in Rome, and sent into Scotland by the Pope, and with special messages from Cardinal Cajetano and Fathers Crichton and Tyrie to Mr James Gordon, Huntly's near relative. The messenger added, that he was directed to reprove the Catholic lords for their disposal of the treasure lately sent, which had been given not to Catholics, but to courtiers who were heretics; as well as for their

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, George Nicolson to Burghley, January 29, 1594-5.
[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, George Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, January 30, 1594-5.
[3] Ibid., October 24, 1594.
[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, February 19, 1594-5. Same to same, March 3, 1594-5. Also ibid., same to same, February 22, 1594-5. Also ibid., Mr Colvile to Sir R. Cecil, March 19, 1594-5. Also ibid., Mr John Colvile, February 22, 1594-5. Historie of James the Sext, p. 344.
[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr John Colvile to S., March 25, 1595.

rashness in "delating" the king to be a Catholic, before the Spanish army destined for Scotland was in readiness. Their union with Bothwell, by which they had greatly exasperated the king, was also condemned by the Pope; and no hope of further treasure held out till they had vindicated themselves before the councillors of the King of Spain in the Low Countries. On Morton's person was found a small jewel or tablet, containing an exquisite representation of the Passion of our Lord, carved minutely in ivory; a present, as he said, from Cardinal Cajetano to the Scottish queen. This James, taking up, asked him to what use he put it. "To remind me," said Morton, "when I gaze on it and kiss it, of my Lord's Passion. Look, my liege," he continued, "how livelily the Saviour is here seen hanging between the two thieves, whilst below, the Roman soldier is piercing His sacred side with the lance. Ah, that I could prevail on my sovereign but once to kiss it before he lays it down!" "No," said James; "the Word of God is enough to remind me of the crucifixion; and besides, this carving of yours is so exceeding small, that I could not kiss Christ without kissing both the thieves and the executioners."[1]

The ministers of the Kirk insisted that this unhappy person should be subjected to the torture of the boots, as the only means of obtaining a full confession; but he was saved from this dreadful suffering by his simplicity, and the candour with which he disclosed to the king all the objects of his mission.[2]

This last blow fell heavily on the party. It convinced Huntly and Errol, that for the present their cause was desperate, and that to retire into a temporary banishment was the only resource which remained. It was in vain that Father Gordon, Huntly's uncle, and a devoted Catholic, implored them to remain; in vain that on a solemn occasion, when Mass was said for the last time in the cathedral church at Elgin, this zealous priest, descending from the high altar and mounting the pulpit, exhorted them not to depart, but remain in their native country and hazard all for the faith. His discourse fell on deaf ears; and finding entreaty fruitless, he resolved to accompany them. On the 17th of March, Errol embarked at Peterhead: and on the 19th, two days after, Huntly, with his uncle and a suite of sixteen persons, took ship at Aberdeen for Denmark; intending, as he said, to pass through Poland into Italy.[3]

Scarcely had they departed, when intelligence of Bothwell reached court. To so miserable a state was he reduced, that he had been seen skulking near Perth with only two followers, meanly clad, and in utter destitution. He then disappeared, and none could tell his fate; but he re-emerged in Orkney, probably, like his infamous namesake, intending to turn pirate. He had one ship and a fly-boat; and his desperate fortunes were still followed, from attachment or adventure, by some of his old "*Camarados*," Colonel Boyd, Captain Foster, and a few other gentlemen. Apparently he was not successful; for we soon hear of him at Paris,[4] in correspondence with his profligate associate, Archibald Douglas.

All apprehensions from Bothwell and the Catholic earls being at an end, and the king having most energetically fulfilled his promises to the Kirk, Protestantism being safe and the hopes of Spain destroyed, he had leisure to address himself to a more difficult task than his last—to restore something like order, justice, and tranquillity to the country. Here all

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr John Colvile to S., March 25, 1595. Also ibid., Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, March 25, 1595. Also ibid., April 5, 1595. Abstract of Letters sent to Sir R. Bowes.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, April 5, 1595. Letters from Scotland to Bowes. Also ibid., Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, April 3, 1595. Also ibid., Mr John Colvile, April 1, 1595. Also ibid., April 2, 1595, "Deposition of Mr John Morton, Jesuit."

[3] MS., State-paper Office, Extracts from Letters from Scotland, by Sir R. Bowes, April 5, 1595.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bothwel to Douglas, June 17, 1595.

was out of joint. The court was divided into factions. The queen, of whose religious orthodoxy great doubts began now to be entertained, hated Mar, who was still intrusted with the person and government of the young prince; a charge which, she insisted, belonged naturally to her.[1] The king supported Mar against his great rival the Chancellor Maitland, a man full of talent, of inordinate ambition, and, as we have already seen, unscrupulous, intriguing, and familiar with conspiracy and blood. Maitland strengthened himself against his enemies by courting the favour of the queen, who had at first treated all his advances with haughty suspicion; but latterly, dreading his strength, or conciliated by his proffered devotion, supported his faction, which included Buccleuch, Cessford, the Master of Glammis, and other powerful barons. The potent house of Hamilton affected neutrality; whilst the ministers of the Kirk also kept themselves aloof, and exerted their whole energies to procure the absolute ruin of Huntly and his exiled associates, by inducing the king to forfeit their estates in earnest, and reduce them to beggary. This James wisely refused. Enough, he thought, had already been done for the safety of the Protestant faith; and to cut up by the roots the ancient houses of Angus, Huntly, and Errol; to punish, by utter ruin and extermination, those who were already exiles for conscience' sake, would have been cruel and impolitic. To Bothwell, indeed, who had repeatedly conspired against his life, he shewed no mercy; and his great estates were divided between Hume, Cessford, and Buccleuch.[1] But the Countesses of Huntly and Errol were permitted to remain in Scotland, and matters so managed that their unfortunate lords should not be utterly destitute. The principle of James was to balance the different factions against each other, keeping all dependent on himself, and throwing his weight occasionally into the one or the other scale, as he judged best. The probable restoration, therefore, of such great men as Huntly, was a useful threat to hold over the heads of their rivals. But with all his policy, the monarch found his position dangerous and difficult. The court and country were full of inflammable materials; and in such a state of things, events apparently trifling might produce a general convulsion. So at least thought Nicolson, the English resident at Edinburgh, on the occurrence of an event which, to feudal ears, sounded trifling enough. David Forrester, a retainer of Mar, and bailiff of Stirling, when riding from Edinburgh to that town, was, on some love-quarrel, waylaid and murdered by the Laird of Dunipace,[3] assisted by the Bruces and the Livingstones, who belonged to the chancellor's faction. Mar instantly accepted this as a defiance; assembled a body of six hundred horse; vowed a deadly revenge; and interdicting the body from being buried, carried it along with him, displaying before it, on two spears, a ghastly picture of Forrester, all mangled and bleeding as he had died. In this way, the earl, in his steel jack, and his men armed to the teeth, carried his murdered vassal in a bravado through the lands of the Livingstones and Bruces, which lay near Linlithgow, on the road between Edinburgh and Stirling; dividing his little force into three wards, and expecting a ruffle with Buccleuch and Cessford, who were reported to be mustering their friends. But the peremptory remonstrances of the king prevented an immediate collision; and a "day of law," as it was then termed, was appointed for the trial of Forrester's slaughter.[4]

James's labour to preserve peace was, indeed, incessant; and but for his vigour and courage, the various factions would have torn the country in pieces. The chancellor had now

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, George Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, June 22, 1595.

[2] MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, p. 1184.

[3] Dunipace is near Larbert, on the little river Carron.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Bowes, July 12, 1595. Also ibid., same to same, June 24, 1595.

gained to his side the powerful assistance of the house of Hamilton; so that his strength was almost irresistible. With his strength, however, increased the odium and unpopularity of his measures. It was now well known that he had been the chief assistant of Huntly in the murder of Moray: he was branded as a hypocrite, all smiles and professions upon the seat of justice, but deep, bloody, and unscrupulous when off it; expressing great love to the Kirk and the ministers, yet careless of practical religion; humble and devoted, as he said, to his sovereign, yet really so haughty, that he did not hesitate to measure his strength with the highest nobles in the land. It was this which provoked Mar, Argyle, and the rest of the ancient earls.

On one occasion James, observing Maitland's defiance, took him roundly to task; reminding him that he was but his creature, a man of yesterday, a cadet of a mean house compared with Mar, who had a dozen vassals for his one;[1] and that it ill became him to enter into proud speeches, or compare himself with the old nobles, and raise factions with Glammis and the queen against the master to whom he owed all. Pasquils, too, and biting epigrams, prognosticating some fatal end, were found pinned to his seat in the court.[2] But Maitland was naturally courageous, and believed himself powerful enough to keep head against the worst. Hamilton, Hume, Fleming, Livingstone, Buccleuch, Cessford, with the Master of Glammis, had now joined him against Mar; and the queen, finding herself thus supported, renewed her efforts to obtain possession of the young prince. The king was inexorable. He had been heard to swear that, were he on his deathbed and speechless, his last sign should be, that Mar should have the boy; and the queen, in despair, took to bed and pretended a mortal sickness. James shut his ears when the news was brought him, and declared it all a trick. At last the lady, between anger and the agitation incident to her situation, for she was about to be confined, fell truly sick. The Mistress of Ochiltree, and a jury of matrons, sat upon her malady, and pronounced it no counterfeit; and James, in real alarm, hurried from Falkland. To his disgust and anger, it was told him that Buccleuch and Cessford, the two men whom he then most dreaded, were with her; but they did not dare abide his coming: and a reconciliation, half stormy, half affectionate, took place. She renewed her clamour for the keeping of the prince: he upbraided her for leaguing with such desperate men as Buccleuch and Cessford, who, in truth, at that moment, were plotting to restrain his person, seize the heir of the throne, and arraign his governor, one of the most faithful of his nobles, of high treason. To humour her would have been the extremity of weakness, and only playing his enemies' game, who, he said, should find that, though he loved her, he could keep his purpose and be master in his own kingdom.[3] This resolute temper saved the monarch. The chancellor controlled Buccleuch, who alleged that they were throwing away their best opportunity: now they could seize the king; next day they themselves might be in fetters. All was ready: the king, the prince, the government, by one bold stroke might be their own. But Maitland's heart failed, or his loyalty revived. He forbade the enterprise. James rode back to Falkland; and when he next visited Edinburgh, his strength was such that he could defy his enemies.[4] The ministers of the Kirk, scandalised by the divisions in the royal family, now remonstrated with the queen, awakened her to a higher sense of her conjugal duties, and convinced her, that to renounce all fac-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr John Colvile to Sir R. Cecil, August 2, 1595.

[2] MS., State-paper Office, Advices from Edinburgh, March 20, 1594-5.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Bowes, July 26, 1595. Also ibid., same to same, July 24, 1595. Also Mr John Colvile to Sir R. Cecil, August 2, 1595. Also ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, August 4, 1595.

[4] Ibid., May 27, 1595.

tions, and follow the commands of her royal husband, was her only safe and Christian course.[1] A letter, written at this time by Nicolson, the English envoy at the Scottish court, to Sir Robert Bowes, who, at his own earnest request, had been suffered to resign his place as resident ambassador, gives us an interesting account of this reconciliation and its effects :—

"The king and queen are lovingly together now at Falkland: the king to go to Stirling to-morrow, and so to his buck-hunting in Lennox and Clydesdale; and after to return to the queen to St Johnston's, there to receive the communion together. The queen first goeth to Sir R. Melvil's house, the Earl of Rothes', and other places, before she goes to St Johnston's. My Lord of Mar and she have spoken, by the king's means. At the first she was very sharp with Mar, but in the end gave him good countenance. Mr Patrick Galloway, in his sermon, was occasioned to teach of the duties of man and wife each to the other; and spoke so persuasively for the keeping their duties therein, as the queen thereon spake and conferred with him, and gave good ear to his advices, and promiseth to follow the same; and hath said that she will have him with her.

"The king caused Mr David Lindsay to travel with the queen, to see what he could try out of them; whereupon Mr David and the queen had long conference. And in the end, the queen said, 'Let the king be plain with the queen, and the queen should be plain with the king;' which Mr David showed to the king, causing him to receive the same even then out of the queen's own mouth; whereupon there was good and kind countenance and behaviour between them, both of them agreeing to satisfy each other; as Mr David looketh that, ere this, the king knoweth who hath persuaded the queen to these former courses; and the queen who hath moved the king to this strangeness with the queen; and that some will be found to have dealt doubly and dangerously with them both. The king intendeth, by little and little, to draw the queen to where Mar is, and there to stay her from these parts, and the company of Buccleuch, Cessford, and the rest. Mr David holdeth the chancellor to be very honest between both parties, and to be for the king; but whatsoever he doeth, it is with consent and leave of the Master of Glammis, Buccleuch, and Cessford, who, if the chancellor should do otherwise, and they know of it, would be the chancellor's greatest enemies, and most dangerous. . . . . The Lord Hume hath promised to follow the king, and is presently with him: so as it is held that the queen's faction is breaking. Always some think, that as the king intends by policy to win the queen, so the queen intends to win the king for the advantage of that side; and I pray God that this prove not too true, that in these fair flowers there prove not yet sharp pricks. As to the slaughter of David Forrester, my Lord of Mar, I think, shall give assurance, and keep on fair terms with such of the Livingstones and Bruces as were not executioners of David's murder; which executioners, for this cause, are to be banished the country by their own friends."[2]

While the court of Holyrood was occupied in gossiping upon such scenes of domestic intrigue and conjugal reconciliation, the Queen of England began bitterly to repent her neglect of Scotland, and to look with alarm to a storm which threatened her on the side of the Isles. She was now trembling for her empire in Ireland, where Tyrone had risen in formidable force, and, assisted with Roman gold and Spanish promises, threatened to wrest from her hands the fairest provinces of the kingdom. In these circumstances, both Elizabeth and the Irish prince looked for assistance and recruits to the Scottish Isles. These nurseries of brave soldiers and hardy seamen were now able to furnish a

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Colvile, August 18, 1595. Same, August 20.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, August 15, 1595.

formidable force: a circumstance not unknown to the English queen, as her indefatigable minister, Burghley, whose diplomatic feelers were as long as they were acute and sensitive, kept up a communication with the Isles. From a paper written in the end of the year 1593, by one of his northern correspondents,[1] it appears that the Isles could, on any emergency, fit out a force of six thousand hardy troops, inured to danger both by sea and land, and equipt for war on either element. Of these, two thousand wore defensive armour, actons, habergeons, and knapsculls;[2] the rest were bowmen or pikemen; but many, adds the island statist, had now become harquebusiers. This force, it is to be observed, was independent of those left at home to labour the ground; the whole of the Isles being different from the rest of feudal Scotland in one essential respect, "that they who occupied the ground were not charged to the wars."[3] Of this western archipelago, the principal islands were Lewis and Skye, lying to the north, Islay and Mull to the south; and amongst the chief leaders, who assumed the state and independence of little princes, were the Earl of Argyle, Lauchlan Maclean of Duart, Angus Macdonald of Dunyveg, Donald Gorm Macdonald of Sleat, and Roderick Macleod of Harris, known in traditionary song as Ruari Mor.[4] Of these chiefs, the Lord of Duart, commonly called Lauchlan Mor, was by far the most talented and conspicuous; and, as Elizabeth well knew, had the power of bridling or letting loose that formidable body of troops which Donald Gorm and Ruari Mor were now collecting to assist her enemies in Ireland. Lauchlan Mor was, in all respects, a remarkable person; by no means illiterate, for he had received his nurture in the low country, and had married a daughter of the Earl of Glencairn. But in war and in personal prowess he had then no equal: an island Amadis of collossal strength and stature, and possessing, by the vigour of his natural talents, a commanding influence over the rude and fierce islesmen. It is curious to trace Elizabeth's connexion with this man. The Lord of Duart's confidential servant happened to be a certain shrewd Celt, named John Achinross; he, in turn, was connected by marriage with Master John Cunningham, a worthy citizen and merchant in Edinburgh. This honest bailie of the capital, forming the link between savage and civilized life, corresponded with Sir Robert Bowes; Bowes with Burghley or Sir Robert Cecil; and thus Elizabeth, sitting in her closet at Windsor or Greenwich, moved the strings which could assemble or disperse the chivalry of the Isles. This is no ideal picture, for the letters of the actors remain. As early as March 1594–5, Achinross informed Bowes that Maclean and Argyle were ready, not only to stay the clan Donnell, who, under Donald Gorm, were then mustering to assist Tyrone; but that Maclean himself would join the English army in Ireland, if Elizabeth would dispatch three or four ships to keep his galleys whilst they attacked the enemy.[5] As the summer came on, and the fleet of Donald and his associates waited only for a fair wind, Cunningham hurried to the Isles, had a conference with Maclean, and thence rode post to London, where, in an interview with Sir Robert Cecil, he urged the necessity of instant action and assistance.[6] The bridle which the Laird of Duart held over the Islesmen was simple enough; being a garrison of six hundred mercenaries, well armed, and ready to be

[1] MS., State-paper Office, December 1593. Note of the West Isles of Scotland, for the Lord Treasurer.

[2] Acton, a quilted leathern jacket, worn under the armour; habergeon, a breast-plate of mail; knapscull, a steel cap or helmet.

[3] MS., State-paper Office, December 1593. Note of the West Isles of Scotland, for the Lord Treasurer.

[4] Gregory's History of the Western Highlands and Isles of Scotland, p. 261.

[5] MS., State-paper Office, March 25, 1595, contents of John Achinross's letter to Robert Bowes.

[6] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, John Cunningham to Sir R. Bowes, June 25, 1595. Also, Maclean of Duart to Sir Robert Cecil, July 4, 1595. Also, same to Sir R. Bowes, July 4, 1595. Also, ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, July 5, 1595

led by him, on a moment's warning, against any island chief who embarked in foreign service, and left his lands undefended at home.[1] The support of this force, however, required funds: Elizabeth demurred; Maclean was obliged to disband his men; and the most part of the fleet weighed anchor, and bore away for Ireland.[2] It consisted of a hundred sail, of which fifty were galleys, the rest smaller craft; and the number of soldiers and mariners was estimated at about five thousand.[3] Nine hundred men, however, under the Captain of the clan Ranald,[4] still remained; and as they passed Mull had the temerity to land for the night; running their "galleys, boats, and birlings," into a little harbour, where they imagined themselves secure. But Maclean, by what Achinross termed a "bauld onset and prattie feit of weir," took the whole company prisoners, threw the chiefs into irons, sent them to his dungeons in his different castles, appropriated their galleys, and transported the common men to the mainland.[5] Amongst the chief prisoners then taken, were the Captain of clan Ranald and three of his uncles, the Laird of Knoydart, M'Ian of Ardnamurchan, Donald Gorm's brother, and others; and an account of the surprise was immediately transmitted by John Achinross to Nicolson, the English envoy at the court of James. We can pardon the enthusiasm and abominable orthoepy of this devoted Highland servant when he exclaims: "My maister is acquentit with thir prattie onsettis, without respect to number findand vantage: for divers tymis he plaid this dance heir aganis his enemies. I assuir you, thir men that are tane and in captivity, ar the maist douttit and abil men in the Ilis. Lat your guid maister and Sir Robert comfort thame with this gude luke, done be ane vailyeant man of weir, and ane man of honor, in beginning of her majestie's service."[6]

Elizabeth was delighted with this exploit of Lauchlan Mor, assured him of her gratitude and friendship, and sent a more substantial proof than words, in a present of a thousand crowns: an "honourable token of her favour," as he called it in a letter to Cecil, in which he promised all duty and service to the queen. She wrote, at the same time, to the Earl of Argyle;[7] flattered him by some rich token of her regard; and ordered Nicolson, her resident at the Scottish court, to deliver it and her letter to him in person, at Dunoon in Argyle. All this was successfully accomplished; and so cordially did Maclean and Argyle co-operate, sowing distrust and division amongst the chiefs and leaders who had followed the banner of Donald Gorm and Macleod, that their formidable force only made the coast of Ireland to meet the English ships, which were on the watch for them, enter into a friendly treaty, and disperse to their different ocean nests, before a single effort of any moment had been made. This sudden arrival, and as sudden disappearance of the fleet of the Islesmen, appears to have puzzled the chroniclers of the times, and even their more acute modern successor. A black cloud had been seen to gather over Ireland; and men waited in stillness for the growl of the thunder and the sweep of the tempest, when it melted into air, and all was once more tranquillity. This seemed unaccountable, almost miraculous; but the letters of honest John Cunningham, and his Celtic relative Achinross, whose epistles smack so strongly of his Gaelic original, introduce us behind the scenes, and discover Lauchlan Mor as the secret agent, the Celtic Prospero, whose wand dispersed the galleys, and restored serenity to the ocean. The reader may be pleased with an extract from a letter of this

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, John Achinross to George Nicolson, July 22, 1595.
[2] Ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, July 26, 1595.
[3] Ibid., Mr George Areskine to Nicolson, Denoon, July 31, 1595.
[4] Ibid., same to same.
[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Achinross to Nicolson, July 31, 1595.
[6] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Achinross to Nicolson.
[7] Ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, August 1, 1595.

brave Lord of Duart to Sir R. Bowes, although his style is a little ponderous, and by no means so polished as the Danish steel axe with which it was his delight to hew down his enemies: he is alluding to the future plan of the campaign intended by Tyrone and O'Donnell against Elizabeth, and the best way to defeat it:—

"The earl is to pursue you on one side, and O'Donnell is to pursue your lands presently on the other side. They think to harm you meikle by this way. If my opinion were followed out, the earl and O'Donnell shall be pursued on both the sides: to wit, by your force of Ireland on the one side, and by the Earl of Argyle's force and mine, with my own presence, on this side. To the which, I would that you moved the Earl of Argyle to furnish two thousand men: myself shall furnish other two thousand; and I would have six or eight hundred of your spearmen, with their *buttis*, [*sic*] and four hundred pikemen. If I were once landed in Ireland with this company, having three or four ships to keep our galleys, I hope in God the earl should lose that name ere our return. . . . In my name your lordship shall have my duty of humble service remembered to her majesty, and commendations to good Sir Robert Cecil, with whom I think to be acquainted. Your lordship will do me a great pleasure if you will let me know of anything in Scotland that may pleasure Sir Robert. I am so *hamely*[1] with your lordship, that without you let me know hereof, I will think that your lordship does dissimull with me. I am here, in Argyle, at pastime and hunting with the earl my cousin. I have respect to other kind of hunting nor this hunting of deer. I am hamely with your lordship, as ye may perceive. At meeting, (for the which I think long,) God willing, we shall renew our acquaintance."[2]

From this island episode we must turn to a different scene, the death-bed of a great minister. The Chancellor Maitland lord Thirlstane, had now, for some years, ruled the court and the country with a firm, unchallenged, and, as many thought, a haughty superiority. He had given mortal offence to the queen; had provoked the hostility of the highest nobles of the land; and, it was whispered, was more feared than loved by his royal master. But he had kept his ground; partly by superiority in practical business talents to all his competitors; partly by that deep political sagacity and foresight which made Burghley pronounce him the "wisest man in Scotland;" and not least of all, by that high personal courage and somewhat unscrupulous familiarity with conspiracy, and even with blood, which blotted most men of this semi-barbarous age. He had, besides, been a pretty consistent Protestant; and although in earlier years he had attacked some of Knox's political tenets, yet recently, the strong and decided part he had adopted against Huntly and the Catholic earls made him a favourite with the ministers of the Kirk. So resistless had he now become, that the queen and her friends had renounced all opposition, and joined his faction against Mar, the governor of the prince, the favourite of his royal master, and one of the oldest and most powerful of the higher nobles.[3] In this his palmy state, when plotting new schemes of ambition, and inflaming the king against the queen; meeting Cessford and Buccleuch, and his other associates, in night "Trysts;"[4] marshalling secretly his whole strength, and laying a "platt," as it was then called, or conspiracy against Mar, by which he hoped to hurl him from his height of power, and rule unchecked over his sovereign; he was suddenly seized with a mortal distemper.[5] At first he struggled fiercely against it,

[1] Hamely, familiar.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lauchlan Maclean of Duart, to Sir R. Bowes, Garvie in Argyle, August 22, 1595.

[3] MS., State-paper Office, Nicolson to Bowes, September 1, 1595.

[4] Tryst, an appointed place of rendezvous.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Colvile to Cecil, September 10, 1595. Ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, September 19, 1595. Ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, September 22, 1595.

tried to throw it off, rode restlessly from place to place, and appeared so active that it was currently said the sickness was only one of his old pretences; but at last the malady mastered him, threw him on his couch, and compelled him, in fear and remorse, to send for the ministers of the Kirk, and implore a visit from the king. James resisted repeated messages; it was even said he had whispered in a courtier's ear, that it would be a small matter if the chancellor were hanged; and when Robert Bruce, one of the leading ministers, rode at four in the morning to Thirlstane, he found the dying statesman full of penitence for neglected opportunities, imploring the prayers of the Kirk, and promising to make many discoveries of strange matters if God granted him time for amendment and reformation.[1] What appeared to weigh heaviest on his conscience, was the part he had acted in sowing dissension between the king and queen; and he seemed much shaken by fears that many dark dealings would come out on this subject. He expressed sorrow, also, for his "partial information against John Knox, and other good men;" and when asked what advice he would leave to the king for the management of his estate, shook his head, observing, "it was too late *speer'd*,"[2] as his thoughts were on another world. Even his enemies, who had quoted against him the Italian adage, "*Il periculo passato, il santo gabato*," rejoiced at last to find that the sickness was no counterfeit; and were little able to restrain their satisfaction when news arrived at court that the chancellor was no more. He died at Thirlstane on the night of the 3d October; and John Colvile, his bitter enemy, exultingly wrote to England that his faction or party were headless, and must fall to pieces: whilst his royal master publicly lamented and secretly rejoiced; inditing to his memory a high poetical panegyric in the shape of an epitaph, and observing, that he would *weel ken* who next should have the Seals, and was resolved no more to use great men or chancellors in his affairs, but such as he could correct and were "*hangable*."[3]

All things, however, were thrown loose and into confusion by his death. The Borders, which had been for some time in disorder, became the daily scenes of havoc, theft and murder; torn with feuds between the Maxwells and the Douglasses; ravaged by invasions of the English;[4] and so reckless of all restraint, that the personal presence of the king was loudly called for. At court the competitors for the chancellor's place were busy, bitter, and clamorous; in the Kirk the ministers gave warning that the Catholic earls, now in banishment, had been plotting their return, and that the Spaniards were on the eve of invading England and Scotland with a mighty force.[5] It was absolutely necessary, they said, that the Kirk should have authority to convene the people in arms, to resist the threatened danger; and that an ambassador should be sent to England to arrange some plan of common defence.[6] James at once consented to the first proposal, and gave immediate directions for the defence of the country; but he refused to send an ambassador to Elizabeth, who had rejected his suits and broken her promises, although he had preferred her friendship and alliance to that of any other prince in Europe. He was, at this moment, he said, ready to act as her lieutenant against the Spaniards, and perish with England in defence of the true religion.[7]

[1] MS., State-paper Office, September 10, 1595, Advertisements from Scotland. Ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, September 22, 1595. Ibid., same to same, September 24. Ibid., same to same, October 3, 1595. "He [the chancellor] is sore troubled in conscience, and with fear that his dealings between the king and queen should come out."

[2] Speer'd; asked. The question was asked too late.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, October 8, 1595, Nicolson to Bowes. Ibid., same to same, January 11, 1595.

[4] Ibid., October 20, 1595.

[5] Ibid., November 27, 1595.

[6] MS., State-paper Office, Advertisements from Edinburgh, December 6, 1595.

[7] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Bowes, November 27, 1595.

Yet still she withheld her supplies, and treated him with suspicion, notwithstanding the proofs he was daily giving of his sincerity in religion, and although she knew him to be drowned in debt. For this last assertion—the dreadful embarrassment of his finances, there was too good ground; and it had been long apparent that, unless some thorough reform took place, matters must come to an extremity. The office of treasurer was held by the Master of Glammis, a man of great power, and one of the chief friends of the late chancellor. Sir Robert Melvil was his deputy; Seton, laird of Parbreath, filled the office of comptroller; and Douglas, the provost of Glenclouden, that of collector. All of them had been protected by Thirlstane during his supremacy in the council; and, it was suspected by the king, had fattened at the royal expense. This idea was encouraged by the queen, who now lived on the most loving terms with her lord, and omitted no opportunity to point out the rapid diminution of the crown revenues, and the contrast between her own command of money, out of so small a dowery as she enjoyed, and the reduced and beggarly condition of the household and palaces of her royal consort. On New-Year's Day, coming playfully to the king, she shook a purse full of gold in his face, and bade him accept it as her gift. He asked where she got it. "From my councillors," she replied, "who have but now given me a thousand pieces in a purse: when will yours do the like?" "Never," said the king; and calling instantly for his collector and comptroller, he dismissed them on the spot, and chose the queen's councillors as his financial advisers. These were Seton lord Urquhart, president of the Session; Mr John Lindsay, Mr John Elphinstone, and Mr Thomas Hamilton; to whom James committed the entire management of his revenues and household. It was soon found that the charge would be too laborious for so small a number, and four others were added: the Prior of Blantyre, Skene the clerk-register, Sir David Carnegie, and Mr Peter Young, master-almoner. These new officers sat daily in the Upper Tolbooth, and from their number were called *Octavians*. They acted without salary; held their commissions under the king's hand alone; and by the vigour, good sense, and orderly arrangements which they adopted, promised a speedy and thorough reformation of all financial abuses.[1]

Elizabeth now deemed it necessary to send Sir Robert Bowes once more as her ambassador to Scotland. He had been recalled from that court, or rather suffered, at his own earnest entreaty, to return to England, as far back as October 1594;[2] and since that time to the present, (January 1595-6,) the correspondence with England, and the political interests of that kingdom, had been entrusted to Mr George Nicolson, who had long acted as Bowes's secretary; and who, from the time that this minister left Edinburgh till his return to the Scottish court, kept up an almost daily correspondence with him. Elizabeth instructed Bowes to assure James of her unalterable friendship, but of the impossibility of advancing a single shilling, drained as she was by her assistance to France, without which Henry must have lost his throne; her war in Ireland; and her preparations against Spain, which, at that instant, had fitted out a more mighty armament against her than the armada of 1588. The ambassador was entrusted not only with a letter from the English queen to James, but with a letter and message to Queen Anne, whom he was to greet with every expression of friendship, and to reproach mildly for her reserve in not communicating to Elizabeth the secret history of the late quarrels between her and her royal husband, regarding the government and keeping of the young prince. He was also to touch on a still more delicate subject—the

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Bowes, January 7, 1595-6. John Colvile, Advertisements from Scotland; from December 7 to January 1, 1595-6.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, October 19, 1594.

reports which had reached the court of England of her change of religion; and to warn her that, although his mistress utterly disbelieved such a slander, she could not be too much on her guard against the crafty men who were in communication with the Pope, and eager to seduce her to their errors.[1] Bowes's reception by James was gracious and cordial. The king declared his satisfaction in hearing that his good sister was so well prepared against the meditated invasion of the Spaniard, and his own readiness to hazard all—life, crown, and kingdom, in her defence and his own; but he reminded Bowes of Lord Zouch's arguments and unfulfilled promises; and whilst he spoke feelingly of his pecuniary embarrassments, and the impossibility of raising soldiers without funds, he hinted significantly, that the Pope and the Catholic earls threw about their gold pieces with an open hand; and did not conceal that large offers had been made to draw him to the side of Spain, although he had no mind to be so "limed." He then mentioned his intention of sending his servant, Mr David Foulis, to communicate to Elizabeth the confessions of certain priests whom he had lately seized, and other discoveries with which she ought to be acquainted; and alluding to Doleman's book on the Succession to the English Crown, which had been recently published, observed, that he took it to be the work of some crafty politician in England, drawn up with affected modesty and impartiality, but real malice against every title except that of the King of Spain and his daughter. Bowes assured the king that this famous work, which made so much noise at the time, was written not in England but in Spain, by Persons, an English Jesuit and traitor; but James retained his scepticism.[2]

The ambassador next sought the queen, and was soon on very intimate and confidential terms with this princess, who expressed herself highly gratified by Elizabeth's letter. Nothing, she said, could give her greater delight than to receive such assurances of kindness and affection; and she would readily follow her advice, as of one whom she most honoured, loved, and trusted; but as to the delicate subject of the late differences between her and the king, and her wish to get the prince into her hands, the matter had been so sudden, and full of peril, that she dared not send either letter or message to the Queen of England. She then threw the blame of the whole on the late chancellor; who had acted, she said, with great baseness, both towards herself and the king. It was he who had first moved her to get the prince out of Mar's hands; it was he who animated the king against her, persuading him that such removal would endanger his crown and person: "and yet," said she, addressing Bowes with great animation and some bitterness, "it was this same man who dealt so betwixt the king and myself, and with the persons interested therein, that the surprise of the body of the king was plotted, and would have taken place at his coming to Edinburgh; but I discovered the conspiracy, and warned and stayed him. Had he come, he must have been made captive, and would have remained in captivity." "These secrets," said Bowes, in his letter to Elizabeth, "she desired to be commended by my letters to your majesty's only hands, view, and secrecy; and that none other should know the same." As to her reported change of religion, the queen frankly admitted that attempts had been made for her conversion to Rome; but all had now passed and failed: she remained a Protestant: and would rather not reveal the names of the practisers. If they again assaulted her religion, Elizabeth should know who they were, and how she had answered them.[3]

The continuance of the rebellion in Ireland, and the intrigues of Tyrone

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Answers to Mr Bowes's articles, January 14, 1595-6. Wholly in Lord Burghley's hand.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Lord Burghley, February 24, 1595-6.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to the Queen, February 24, 1595-6.

with the Western Isles, had greatly annoyed Elizabeth; and Bowes was ordered to communicate with the king, and with Maclean of Duart, on the subject. He found that James had resolved to adopt speedily some decided measures to bring the Isles into order; and hoped to succeed by employing in this service the Earl of Argyle, Maclean, and Mackenzie, to whose sister Maclean had lately married his eldest son. The ambassador had been, as usual, tutored to spare his mistress's purse, whilst he sounded Maclean's "mind, power, and resolution;"[1] and exerted himself to the utmost to drive a hard bargain. He was alarmed, too, with the din of warlike preparations then sounding through the western archipelago: Donald Gorm was mustering his men, and repairing his galleys; Macleod of Harris had lately landed from Ireland, and was ready to return with fresh power; and Angus Maconnel, another potent chief, was assembling his galleys and soldiers.[2] Maclean himself was in Tiree, then reckoned ten days' journey from Edinburgh; and Argyle, so intent in investigating the murder of Campbell of Calder, now traced to Campbell of Ardkinglass, that Bowes could have no immediate transactions with either. He set, however, Cunningham and Achinross, his former agents, to work; and when these active emissaries got amongst the Highlanders, the storm of letters, memorials, contracts, queries, answers, and estimates, soon poured down on the unhappy head of Bowes, who implored Cecil, but with small success, to send him instructions, and some portion of treasure, to satisfy Elizabeth's Celtic auxiliaries, who clamoured for gold. Maclean was perfectly ready, as before, to attack Tyrone; and confident that the plan of the campaign, which he had already communicated, if carried into vigorous effect, would reduce the great rebel. But he made it imperative on the queen to furnish two thousand soldiers, and advance a month's pay to his men. He himself, he said, had neither spared "gear nor pains in the service; and yet her majesty's long promised present of a thousand crowns had not yet arrived."[3] These remonstrances produced the effect desired. Elizabeth was shamed into some settlement of her promises; and Maclean, with his island chivalry, declared himself ready to obey her majesty's orders with all promptitude and fidelity.[4]

The ambassador speedily discovered that the eighteen months during which he had been absent, had added both energy and wisdom to James's character. It was evident there was more than empty compliment in Nicolson's observation—that in severity he began to rule like a king. There was still, indeed, about him much that was frivolous, undignified, and capricious; much favouritism, much extravagance, an extraordinary love of his pleasures, and a passion for display in oratory, poetry, theology, and scholastic disputation, which was frequently ridiculous; but with all this, he was dreaded by his nobles, and compelled respect and obedience. As Elizabeth advanced to old age, his eye became steadily fixed on the English crown, which he considered his undoubted right; and the one great engrossing object of his policy was to secure it. His fairest chance, he thought, to gain the respect and good wishes of the English people, when death took from them their own great princess, was to shew that he knew how to rule over his own unruly subjects. Hence his vigorous determination to restrain, by every possible means, the power of the greater nobility; to recruit his exhausted finances; to reduce the Isles, and consolidate his kingdom; and to bridle the claims of the Kirk, in all

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, February 24, 1595-6.

[2] Ibid., March 6, 1595-6. Memorial to John Cunningham, February 22, 1595-6. Answers by Maclean to the Questions proposed by Sir R. Bowes, March 30, 1596.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, February 24, 1595-6. Ibid., Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, March 6, 1595-6. Ibid., Bowes to Cecil, March 16, 1595-6. Ibid., Maclean to Bowes, Coll, March 18, 1595-6. Ibid., Maclean's Answers to Bowes, March 30, 1596.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, April 7, 1596.

matters of civil government, or interference with the royal prerogative: whilst he warmly seconded their efforts for the preservation of the reformed religion, and resistance to the efforts of its enemies.

Not long after Bowes's arrival, the convention of the General Assembly met in Edinburgh; and the king, then absent on a hunting expedition, broke off his sport, and returned to Holyrood, that he might "honour the Kirk (as Bowes observed) with his presence and his oration." The moderator, Mr Robert Pont, warmly welcomed the royal party; which embraced the Duke of Lennox, Lord Hamilton, the Earls of Argyle, Mar, and Orkney: and addressing the king, thanked him in name of the Assembly for his presence; reminding him of the honour obtained by Constantine in favouring the ancient fathers of the Church, and by David in dancing before the ark. In reply, James professed his zeal for religion since his youth up. He had ever esteemed it, as he declared, more glory to be a Christian than a king, whatever slanders to the contrary were spoken against him. It was this zeal which moved him to convene the present Assembly: for being aware of the designs of Spain, their great enemy, against religion and this isle, he was anxious to meet, not only the ministry, but the barons and gentlemen, to receive their advice, and resolve on measures to resist the common enemy. Two points he would press on them—reformation and preparation: the reformation of themselves, clergy, people, and king. For his own part, he never refused admonition: he was ever anxious to be told his faults; and his chamber door should never be closed to any minister who reproved him. All he begged was, that they would first speak privately before they arraigned him in open pulpit. He hated the common vice of ambition; but of one thing he was really ambitious—to have the name of James the Sixth honoured as the establisher of religion, and the provider of livings for the ministry throughout his whole dominions. And now, as to his second point, preparation against the common enemy, one thing was clear—they must have paid troops; the country must be put to charges: the times were changed since their forefathers followed each his lord or his laird to Pinkie field; a confused multitude, incapable of discipline, and an easy prey to regular soldiers, as the event of that miserable day could testify. Of how many great names had it been the wreck and ruin! Since then the fashion and art of war had entirely altered; and he protested it was a shame that Scotland should be lying in careless security, whilst all other countries were up and in arms.[1]

This speech gave great satisfaction to the ministers; and their joy was increased by a message brought to them soon after by Mr John Preston and Mr Edward Bruce, intimating the king's resolution to have the whole kirks in Scotland supplied with ministers, and endowed with sufficient stipends. He requested the Kirk to cause their commissioners to meet with those councillors and officers whom he had appointed for this purpose, and to fix upon some plan for carrying his resolution into effect. But he commanded his commissioners to represent to the ministers of the Kirk how much this good work was hindered by themselves. Why did they teach the people that the king and his councillors resisted the planting of kirks, and swallowed up the livings of the clergy, when they were truly most willing that the whole kirks should be planted, and the rents of the ministers augmented, as far as could be obtained with consent of the nobility and the tacksmen of the teinds,[2] whose rights, without order of law, could not be impaired?[3]

[1] MS., State-paper Office, March 25, 1596, the King of Scots' Speech at the Assembly of the Ministry. Ibid., Bowes to Lord Burghley, March 26, 1596.

[2] Tacksmen of the teinds, that is the farmers of the tithes.

[3] MS., State-paper Office, Instructions to Mr John Preston and Mr Edward Bruce. Answers of the General Assembly to the same, March 30, 1596.

The Assembly received such propositions with the utmost satisfaction; and whilst they protested their ignorance that any of their number had given, in their discourses, any just cause of offence, it would be their care, (they said,) in future, so wisely to handle their doctrine, that neither king nor council should be discouraged in the furtherance of their good work. Meantime, before they separated, they would humbly beseech his majesty to examine and remove "certain griefs which still eat like a canker into the body of the Kirk." Divers Jesuits and excommunicated Papists were entertained within the country, confirming in error those already perverted; endangering the unstable, and holding out hopes of the return of the Papist earls, with the assistance of strangers. The lands of these forfeited traitors were, to the grief of all good men, still peaceably enjoyed by them; their confederates and friends suffered to go at large; whilst the laws, not only against such treasons, but on all other points, were so partially administered, that a flood of crime, murders, oppressions, incests, adulteries, and every species of wrong, inundated the land, and threatened to tear society in pieces.[1]

To this remonstrance a favourable answer was returned; and nothing but fair weather appeared between the sovereign and the Kirk. Yet it was whispered that, beneath this serenity, James had some perilous projects in his head, and meditated a restoration of the Catholic earls.[2] All, however, was quiet for the moment; and the king was looking anxiously for the return of his envoy Foulis, who had been sent to Elizabeth, when an event occurred on the borders which threatened to throw everything into confusion. Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, a baron of proud temper, undaunted courage, and considered one of the ablest military leaders in Scotland, was at this time warden of the west marches; having for his brother-warden of England, Lord Scrope, also a brave and experienced officer. Scrope's deputy was a gentleman of the name of Salkeld; Buccleuch's, a baron of his own clan, Robert Scott of Haining; and in the absence of the principals, it was the duty of these subordinate officers to hold the warden courts for the punishment of outlaws and offenders. Such courts presented a curious spectacle: for men met in perfect peace and security, protected by the law of the Borders, which made it death for any Englishman or Scotsman to draw weapon upon his greatest foe, from the time of holding the court till next morning at sunrise. It was judged that, in this interval, all might return home; and it is easy to see that, with such a population as that of the Borders, nothing but the most rigid enforcement of this law could save the country from perpetual rapine and murder. William Armstrong of Kinmont, or in the more graphic and endearing phraseology of the borders, *Kinmont Willie*, was at this time one of the most notorious and gallant thieves or freebooters in Liddesdale. He was himself a man of great personal strength and stature; and had four sons, Jock, Francie, Geordie, and Sandie Armstrong, each of them a braver and more successful moss-trooper than the other. Their exploits had made them known and dreaded over the whole district; and their father and they had more "bills filed" against them at the warden courts, more personal quarrels and family feuds to keep their blood hot and their hands on their weapons, than any twenty men in Liddesdale. This Willie of Kinmont, who was a retainer of Buccleuch and a special favourite of his chief, had been attending a warden court, held by the English and Scottish de-

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Instructions to Mr John Preston and Mr Edward Bruce. Answers of the General Assembly to the same, March 30, 1596.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, May 18, 1596. It was about this time, June 7, 1596, that the great Napier presented to the king his paper entitled "Secret Inventions profitable and necessary in these days for defence of the island, and withstanding of Strangers, Enemies of God's Truth and Religion." It will be found in Napier's Life of John Napier of Merchiston, p. 247.

puty wardens, at a place named the Dayholm of Kershope, where a small *burn* or rivulet divides the two countries, and was quietly returning home through Liddesdale, with three or four in company, when he was suddenly attacked by a body of two hundred English Borderers, chased for some miles, captured, tied to a horse, and carried in triumph to Carlisle castle; where Lord Scrope the governor and warden cast him, heavily ironed, into the common prison. Such an outrageous violation of Border law was instantly complained of by Buccleuch, who wrote repeatedly to Lord Scrope, demanding the release of his follower; and receiving no satisfactory reply, swore that he would bring Kinmont Willie out of Carlisle castle, quick or dead, with his own hand.[1] The threat was esteemed a mere bravado; for the castle was strongly garrisoned and well fortified, in the middle of a populous and hostile city, and under the command of Lord Scrope, as brave a soldier as in all England. Yet Buccleuch was not intimidated. Choosing a dark tempestuous night, (the 13th of April,) he assembled two hundred of his bravest men at the tower of Morton, a fortalice on the "debateable land," on the water of Sark, about ten miles from Carlisle. Amongst these, the leader whom he most relied on was Watt Scott of Harden; but along with him were Watt Scott of Branxholm, Watt Scott of Goldielands, Jock Elliot of the Copshaw, Sandie Armstrong, son to Hobbie the Laird of Mangerton, Kinmont's four sons—Jock, Francie, Sandie, and Geordie Armstrong, Rob of the Langholm, and Willie Bell the Redcloak; all noted and daring men. They were well mounted, armed at all points, and carried with them scaling-ladders, besides iron crowbars, sledge-hammers, handpicks, and axes. Thus furnished, and favoured by the extreme darkness of the night, they passed the river Esk; rode briskly through the Grahames' country; forded the Eden, then swollen over its banks; and came to the brook Caday, close by Carlisle, where Buccleuch made his men dismount, and silently led eighty of them, with the ladders and iron tools, to the foot of the wall of the base or outer court of the castle. Everything favoured them: the heavens were as black as pitch, the rain descended in torrents; and as they raised their ladders to fix them on the cope-stone, they could hear the English sentinels challenge as they walked their rounds. To their rage and disappointment, the ladders proved too short; but finding a postern in the wall, they underminded it, and soon made a breach enough for a soldier to squeeze through. In this way a dozen stout fellows passed into the outer court, (Buccleuch himself being the fifth man who entered,[2]) disarmed and bound the watch, wrenched open the postern from the inside, and thus admitting their companions, were masters of the place. Twenty-four troopers now rushed to the castle jail, Buccleuch meantime keeping the postern, forced the door of the chamber where Kinmont was confined, carried him off in his irons, and sounding their trumpet, the signal agreed on, were answered by loud shouts and the trumpet of Buccleuch, whose troopers filled the base court. All was now terror and confusion, both in town and castle. The alarum-bell rang, and was answered by his brazen brethren of the cathedral and the town-house; the beacon blazed up on the top of the great tower; and its red, uncertain glare on the black sky and the shadowy forms and glancing armour of the borderers, rather increased the horror and their numbers. None could see their enemy or tell his real strength. Lord Scrope, believing, as he afterwards wrote to Burghley, that five hundred Scots were in possession of the castle, kept himself close within his chamber. Kinmont Will himself, as he was carried on his friends' shoulders beneath the warden's window, roared

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C. The names of such as enforced the Castle for Kinmont; dated, in Burghley's hand, April 13.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C. The names of such as enforced the Castle for Kinmont.

out a lusty "Good night" to his lordship; and in a wonderfully brief space Buccleuch had effected his purpose, joined his men on the Caday, remounted his troopers, forded once more the Esk and the Eden, and bearing his rescued favourite in the middle of his little band, regained the Scottish Border before sunrise. This brilliant exploit, the last and assuredly one of the bravest feats of Border warfare, was long talked of; embalmed in an inimitable ballad; and fondly dwelt on by tradition, which has preserved some graphic touches. Kinmont, in swimming his horse through the Eden, which was then flooded, was much cumbered by the irons round his ankles; and is said to have dryly observed, that often as he had breasted it, he never had such heavy spurs. His master, Buccleuch, eager to rid him of these shackles, halted at the first smith's house they came to within the Scottish Border; but the door was locked, the family in bed, and the knight of the hammer so sound a sleeper, that he was only wakened by the lord warden thrusting his long spear through the window, and nearly spitting both vulcan and his lady.[1]

Jocular, however, as were these circumstances to the victors, the business was no laughing matter to Lord Scrope, who came forth from his bedchamber to find that his castle had been stormed, his garrison bearded, and his prisoner carried off by only eighty men. He instantly wrote to the privy-council and Lord Burghley, complaining of so audacious an attack upon one of the queen's castles in time of peace; and advising his royal mistress to insist with James on the delivery of Buccleuch, that he might receive the punishment which so audacious an outrage, as he termed it, deserved. But Buccleuch had much to offer in his defence; he pleaded that Kinmont's seizure and imprisonment had been a gross violation of the law; that it was not until every possible representation had failed, and till his own sovereign's remonstrance, addressed to Elizabeth, had been treated with contempt, that he took the matter into his own hands; and that his borderers had committed no outrage, either on life or property, although they might have made Scrope and his garrison prisoners, and sacked the city. All this was true; and the king for a while resisted compliance with Elizabeth's demand, in which he was supported by the whole body of his council and barons, and even by the ministers of the Kirk; whilst the people were clamorous in their applause, and declared that no more gallant action had been done even in Wallace's days.[2] But at last James's spirit quailed under the impetuous remonstrance of the queen; and the Border chief was first committed to ward in the castle of St Andrews,[3] and afterwards sent on parole to England, where he remained till the outrages of the English borderers rendered his services as warden absolutely necessary to preserve the country from havock.[4] He was then delivered. It is said that, during his stay in England as a prisoner at large, he was sent for by Elizabeth, who loved bold actions even in her enemies. She demanded of him, with one of those lion-like glances which used to throw her proudest nobles on their knees, how he had dared to storm her castle: to which the border baron, nothing daunted, replied — "What, madam, is there that a brave man may not dare?" The rejoinder pleased her; and turning to her courtiers, she exclaimed—"Give me a thousand such leaders, and I'll shake any throne in Europe!'[5]

This obsequiousness of the Scottish king to the wishes of the Queen of England was not without a purpose;

[1] Contemporary Account in the Warrender MSS.; and MS Letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Lord Scrope to Burghley. Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, vol. ii., p. 60.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, July 3, 1596. Spottiswood, p. 416.

[3] Ibid., August 19, 1596. Ibid., October 12, 1596.

[4] Ibid., Bowes to the queen, November 10, 1596.

[5] Notes on the ballad of Kinmont Willie. Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, vol. ii., pp. 49, 50. Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xvi., p. 318.

for James had now resolved on the restoration of the Catholic earls, and anticipated the utmost opposition, not only from the powerful party of the Kirk, but from Burghley and his royal mistress. The aged lord treasurer, who had long managed the whole affairs of Scotland, had recently written to his son, Sir Robert Cecil, now secretary of state, that he suspected the "Octavians," the eight councillors who now ruled the state, to be little else than "hollow Papists." It was evident, he added, that the king was much governed by them, and that his affection to the "crew" would increase: he advised, therefore, that Bowes, the English ambassador, should have secret conference with the ministers of the Kirk, who would discover the truth, and devise a remedy.[1] This was written in July; and there were good reasons for Burghley's suspicions. As early as May, Bowes had detected the incipient movement in favour of the banished earls, and their resolution to petition the king for their return.[2] They were to make submission to the king and the Church, and to have their cause espoused by the Duke of Lennox. Not long after, the Earl of Huntly landed from the Continent at Eyemouth; and passing in disguise into Scotland, encountered on his road the Lord St Colm, whose brother he had slain. Fortunately for the returned exile, his mean dress concealed him from the vengeance of his enemy, and he arrived safely amongst his friends; who, aware of the court intrigues in his favour, exerted their utmost efforts to procure his restoration. But these were met by cries of horror and warning from the Kirk, which increased to their loudest note when it was reported that Errol had been seen with Huntly at his castle, the Bog of Gicht, and that Angus had dared to come secretly into Perth, from which he was only driven by a peremptory charge of the magistrates.[3]

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Burghley to Sir Robert Cecil, July 10, 1596, addressed, "To my lovying son."

[2] Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, May 18, 1596.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, Oct. 20, 1596.

Meanwhile the Countess of Huntly, who had much influence at court, presented some overtures upon the part of her husband. He had never, he said, held any traffic with any individuals whatever, against the reformed religion, since his leaving Scotland, and was ready to abide his trial, if any one dared to accuse him. He was ready, also, to banish from his company all seminary priests and known Papists; and would willingly hold conference on the subject of religion with any ministers of the Kirk, by whose arguments he might possibly be induced to embrace their religion. He would receive, he added, any Presbyterian pastor into his house for his better instruction; would support him at his own expense; would assist the Kirk with his utmost power in the maintenance of their discipline, and only required, in return, that a reasonable time should be given him to be satisfied in his conscience; and that, meanwhile, he should be absolved from the heavy sentence of excommunication which had been pronounced against him.[4]

Nothing could be more moderate than such requests; but the Kirk fired at the very idea that an excommunicated traitor, as they termed the earl, who had been guilty of idolatry, a crime punishable by death; and who, in the face of his sentence of banishment, had dared, without license, to return, should have the hardihood to propose any terms whatever. It was whispered that the Spanish faction was daily gaining strength; that the earls would not show themselves so openly unless they knew their return to be acceptable to the king; that the party against the truth and liberty of the Word was bold and confident of success, both in England and at home; and that, if some great and resolute resistance were not instantly made, the Kirk, with all its boasted purity and privileges, would become the prey of Antichrist. To remedy or avert these evils, a day of humiliation was ap-

[4] MS., State-paper Office, Offer of the Countess of Huntly, October 19, 1596. Also, Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xvi., p. 305.

pointed to be observed with more than ordinary rigour; in which the people and the ministry were called upon to weep between the porch and the altar, for a land polluted by the enemies of God, and threatened with the loss of His favour. A body of sixteen commissioners was selected from the ministers, who were to sit monthly at Edinburgh, under the name of the "Council of the Church:" their duty was to provide, according to the ancient phrase, "*Ne quid Ecclesia detrimenti caperet;*" and through them a constant correspondence was kept up with all parts of the realm.[1]

These proceedings alarmed the king, who could see no good grounds for the erection of so formidable a machinery against what he deemed an imaginary attack, and directed some members of his privy-council to hold a meeting with the more moderate ministers, and persuade them of the groundlessness of their apprehensions. If, he said, the three earls were repentant; if they had already suffered exile and were solicitous to hear the truth and return to their country and the bosom of the Church, why should he, their prince, be precluded from the exercise of mercy, the brightest jewel in his prerogative? and why, above all, should the Church, whose doors ought ever to stand open to returning penitents, shut them remorselessly in their faces, and consign them to darkness and despair?

These sentiments of the king were as politic as they were merciful; for in the present state of the kingdom, considering Elizabeth's advanced age and the power of the Roman Catholics in England, as well as in his own dominions, nothing could have been more unfavourable to his title of succession than to have become a religious persecutor. Indeed, the arguments of the more violent amongst the ministers were revolting and absurd. The crime of which the Catholic earls had been guilty (so they reasoned) was of that atrocious nature which rendered pardon by the civil power impossible. They were idolaters, and must die the death; though, upon repentance, they might be absolved by the Kirk from the sentence of spiritual death.[2]. Such a merciless mode of reasoning, proceeding, as Spottiswood has remarked, rather from "passion than any good zeal," greatly disgusted the king; who perceived that, under the alleged necessity of watching over the purity of the faith, the Kirk were erecting a tribunal independent alike of the law and the throne. Nor did James conceal these sentiments; inveighing bitterly against the ministers, both in public and private, at council and table. It was in vain that some of the brethren (for here, as in all other popular factions, there was a more moderate party, who were dragged forward and hustled into excesses by the more violent) entreated him to explain the causes of his offence, and declared their anxiety for an agreement. "As to agreement," said the monarch, "never will there be an agreement as long as the limits of the two jurisdictions, the civil and the ecclesiastical, are so vague and undistinguishable. The lines must be strongly and clearly drawn. In your preachings, your license is intolerable; you censure both prince, estate, and council; you convoke General Assemblies without my authority; you pass laws under the allegation that they are purely ecclesiastical, but which interfere with my prerogative, and restrict the decisions of my council and my judges. To these my allowance or approbation is never required; and under the general head of 'scandal,' your synods and presbyteries fulminate the most bitter personal attacks, and draw within the sphere of their censure every conceivable grievance. To think of agreement under such circumstances is vain; even if made, it could not last for a moment."[3]

In the midst of all this, and when the feelings of the king and the clergy were in a state of high excitement, Mr David Black, one of the ministers of St Andrews, a fierce Puritan, delivered a discourse in which he not only animadverted on the threatened triumph of idolatry

[1] Spottiswood, p. 418.

[2] Spottiswood, pp. 418, 419.

[3] Ibid., p. 419.

at home, but raised his voice against the prelacy which had established itself in the neighbouring kingdom. The Queen of England, he said, was an atheist; the religion professed in that kingdom nothing better than an empty show, guided by the injunctions of the bishops; and not content with this pageant at home, they were now persuading the king to set it up in Scotland. As for his highness, none knew better than he did of the meditated return of these Papist earls; and herein he was guilty of manifest treachery. But what could they look for? Was not Satan the head of both court and council? Were not all kings devil's bairns? Was not Satan in the court, in the guiders of the court, in the head of the court? Were not the lords of Session miscreants and bribers, the nobility cormorants, and the Queen of Scotland a woman whom, for fashion's sake, they might pray for, but in whose time it was vain to hope for good?[1]

This insolent attack was followed, as might have been expected, by an indignant complaint of Bowes, the English ambassador; and the offender was immediately cited to appear before the privy-council. To obey this summons, however, would have been construed into an abandonment of the highest privileges of the Kirk; and Black at once declined the jurisdiction of the tribunal. His "Declinator" is an extraordinary paper, and, by the high tone which it assumed, fully justified all the apprehensions of the king. "Albeit," said he, addressing the king and council, "I am ready, by the assistance of the grace of God, to give a confession, and to stand to the defence of every point of the truth of God, uttered by me, either by opening up of this word, or application thereof, before your majesty or council; . . . yet, seeing I am brought at this time to stand before your majesty and council, as a judge set to cognosce and discern upon my doctrine, wherethrough my answering to the said pretended accusation might import with the manifest prejudice of the liberties of the Kirk, and acknowledging also of your majesty's jurisdiction in matters that are mere spiritual, which might move your majesty to attempt farther in the spiritual government of the Kirk of God: . . . Therefore (so he continued) I am constrained, in all humility and submission of mind, to use a *declinature* of the judgment, at least *in prima instantia*, for the following reasons: First, the Lord Jesus, the God of order and not of confusion, as appeared most evidently in all the Kirks of His saints, (of whom only I have the grace of my calling, as His ambassador, albeit most unworthy of that honour to bear His name amongst the saints,) He has given me His Word, and no law nor tradition of man, as the only instructions whereby I should rule the whole actions of my calling in preaching of the Word, administering of the seals thereof, and exercising of the discipline: and in discharge of this commission I cannot fall in the reverence of any evil law of man, but in so far as I shall be found past the compass of my instructions; which cannot be judged accordingly to that order established by that God of order, but [except] by the prophets, whose lips He hath appointed to be the keepers of His heavenly wisdom, and to whom He hath subjected the spirit of the prophets. And now, seeing it is the preaching of the Word whereon I am accused, which is a principal point of my calling, of necessity the prophets must first declare whether I have kept the bounds of my direction, before I come to be judged of your majesty: which being done, and I found culpable in transgressing any point of that commission which the Lord has given me, I refuse not to abide your majesty's judgment in the second instance, and to underly whatsoever punishment it shall be found I have deserved.

"Secondly, because the liberty of the Kirk, and the whole discipline thereof, according as the same has been, and is presently exercised within

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Effect of Information against Mr David Black. Moyse's Memoirs, p. 128. Also, ibid. Process against Mr David Black, December 9, 1596.

your majesty's realm, has been confirmed by divers acts of parliament, and approved in the Confession of Faith, by the subscription and acts of your majesty, and of your majesty's estate and the whole body of the country, and peaceably enjoyed by the office-bearers of the Kirk in all points, and namely in the foresaid point, anent the judicatory of the preaching of the Word *in prima instantia*, as the practice of late examples evidently will show: therefore, the question concerning my preaching, ought, first, according to the grounds and practice aforesaid, to be judged by the ecclesiastical senate."[1]

This resolute refusal to submit himself to the judgment of the law greatly enraged the king, and convinced him that the time was come to make a stand against the exorbitant claims of the Kirk. It confirmed him, also, in his resolution to extend his favour to the Catholic earls, upon their due submission; and at all hazards to put down that spirit of dictation and interference which might have soon made the tyranny and license of the ministers intolerable. Having understood, therefore, that a copy of Mr Black's declinature had been sent by the commissioners of the Kirk to the various presbyteries throughout the kingdom for their signature, with letters commending the cause to their assistance and prayers, James at once construed this into an act of mutiny; and by a public proclamation not only discharged the commissioners from holding any further meetings, but commanded them to leave the capital and repair within twenty-four hours to their flocks.[2] But this royal order they were in no temper to obey. They instantly convened, and, in the phrase used by their own historian, "laid their letters open before the Lord."[3] The danger, they declared, was imminent; and the ministers of the city must instantly, in their pulpits, deal mightily with the power of the Word against the charge which commanded them to desert their duty. As the spiritual jurisdiction flowed immediately from Christ, and could in no way proceed from a king or civil magistrate, so also the power to convene for the exercise of such jurisdiction came directly from Christ, and could neither be impeded nor controlled by any Christian prince. They declared, therefore, that they would not obey the proclamation, but remain together to watch over the safety of Christ's Church, now in extreme jeopardy; and sent an angry message to the "Octavians," the eight councillors who then managed the government, assuring them, that as the Kirk had been in peace and liberty on their coming to office, and was now plunged into the greatest troubles, they could not but hold them responsible for the late bitter attacks upon its privileges.

This accusation was indignantly repelled by Seton, the president of the Session; and from him the commissioners of the Kirk repaired to the king; who assured them, with greater mildness than some had expected, that if Black would withdraw his "Declinator" all could be well arranged: a proposal which the more moderate party in the Kirk anxiously advised to be adopted. "At this moment," they said, "the court stands in some awe of the Kirk; and our wisest plan is to make the best conditions we can. If we measure our strength with the king, we shall be found too weak, and may lose the ground we have gained." But others, more fierce and zealous, arraigned such counsels as Erastian, and worldly-wise. To renounce the least of their privileges would, they argued, be the sure way to lose them all; to stand to their ground the only way to prevail: it was God's cause; and He who had the hearts of princes in His hand would maintain it.[4]

These counsels prevailed. The monarch, irritated by the rejection of his offer, commanded the trial of Black to proceed. So anxious, however, was he to avoid extremities, that after the judges had pronounced their opinion

[1] MS., State-paper Office, David Black's Declaration to the King's Majesty and Council, November 22, 1596. Calderwood, p. 337.
[2] Calderwood, p. 341. [3] Ibid.
[4] Calderwood, pp. 340, 341. Spottiswood, p. 423.

that the matters charged against him amounted, if proved, to treason, and were within the jurisdiction of the king and council, he deferred the trial till next day; and in the interval sent for some of the ministers, with the hope that, even at this latest hour, some mutual concessions might lead to peace. It had been reported to him, he said, that they were in terror lest their spiritual jurisdiction should be invaded; but nothing could be further from his mind than any abridgment of the liberties of the Kirk; and he was ready, by a public declaration on this point, to quiet their minds. "But," he continued, "this licentious manner of discoursing of affairs of state in the pulpit cannot be tolerated. My claim is only to judge in matters of sedition, and other civil and criminal causes, and of speeches that may import such crimes, wheresoever they may be uttered,—in the pulpit or elsewhere: for surely, if treason and sedition be crimes, much more are they so if committed in the pulpit, where the Word of Truth alone should be taught and heard."

To this some of the ministers replied, that they did not plead for the privilege of place, but for respect due to their message, which was received from God, and far above the control of any civil judicature. "Most true," said James; "and would you keep to your message, there would and could be no strife. But I trust your message be not to rule estates, and, when matters dislike you, to stir the people to sedition, making both me and my counsellors odious by your railings." —"If any dare do so," said the champion of the Kirk, "and have passed the bounds, it is reason he be punished with all extremity; but this question of his having passed the bounds must be judged by the Church." "And shall not I," said the king, with some asperity, "have power to call and punish a minister that breaketh out in treasonable speeches, but must come to your presbytery and be a complainer? I have had good proof already what justice ye will do me; and were this a doubtful case, where by any colour the speeches might be justified, there might be some excuse for saying the minister should be convicted by his brethren; but here, what says Mr Black? 'All kings are devil's bairns; the treachery of the king's heart is discovered.' Who sees not that this man hath passed his bounds? Who will say he hath kept to his message?"

It was easier to demur to this than to answer it; and so convinced were the ministers at the moment of the reasonableness of the king's desires, that, after much conference and cavilling, they agreed to withdraw from the contest, till the limits between the civil and spiritual jurisdictions should be discussed and decided in a lawful General Assembly. On his side, also, James relaxed in the rigour of his requisitions. He was content, he said, that Black should be brought to his presence; and on his admission or denial of the truth of the accusations, be judged by three of his own brethren,—Mr David Lindsay, Mr James Nicolson, and Mr Thomas Buchanan. Matters were now on the very eve of an amicable adjustment, when it was unfortunately suggested to the king, that by this mode of settlement he would compromise his dignity, and that of his consort, unless Mr Black first acknowledged his offence against the queen. From such a proceeding the indignant minister revolted. He would plead to no offence, he said; for he was guilty of none. The court before whom he had been tried had evinced the most shameless injustice; had refused the most unexceptionable witnesses, who would have amply proved his innocence. Provost, bailies, rectors, deans, principals, and regents of colleges, had been ready to testify in his favour; and the judges had admitted in their place the evidence of ignorant and partial persons, whom it was impossible to believe. Come what might, he would never plead before a civil tribunal for an alleged spiritual delinquency; but if the monarch chose to remit him to his lawful judge, the ecclesiastical senate, he would declare

the truth, and, if found guilty, cheerfully submit to its censure.[1]

This second declinature enraged the king even more than the first; and having summoned his council, he commanded the trial to proceed; but no prisoner appeared. The depositions of the witnesses were then read; and Black, in absence, was found guilty of having falsely and treasonably slandered the king, the queen his royal consort, his neighbour princess the Queen of England, and the Lords of Council and Session. It was left to the king to name the due punishment for such offences; but till the royal pleasure were known, he was sentenced to be confined beyond the North Water, and within six days to enter his person in ward.[2] Yet although armed by this sentence, and holding the sword of the civil power over the heads of the guilty, James arrested its descent, and to the last shewed an anxiety for a compromise. The punishment of Black, he said, should be of the lightest kind; and no ministers should be called before the privy council till it had been found in a General Assembly that the king might judge whether they passed the bounds in doctrine. Meanwhile, the acts of council so obnoxious to the brethren should be deleted, the offensive proclamations amended, and every reasonable safeguard provided against the alleged encroachments upon the liberties of the Kirk.

These amicable feelings were unfortunately construed rather into an admission of weakness than a desire for peace; and the commissioners of the Kirk, sternly refusing to abate an atom of their demands, declared that no punishment could be inflicted on a man who had not yet been tried. On the other hand, it was urged by Seton, president of the Session, and one of the Octavians, that unless some punishment followed the sentence pronounced upon Black, the king could never make that process a good ground for claiming the jurisdiction over the ministers. The two antagonists, therefore, the Kirk and the Crown, found themselves, after these protracted overtures, more mortally opposed to each other than before. The Kirk, protesting that every effort had failed to obtain redress for the wrongs offered to Christ's kingdom, proclaimed a fast; commanded all faithful pastors to betake themselves to their spiritual armour; caused "the doctrine," to use the phrase of these times, "to sound mightily;" and protested that, "whatever might be the consequences, they were free of his majesty's blood."[3]

The king received this announcement with the utmost scorn, commanded the commissioners instantly to depart the city, ordered Black to enter into ward, and published a declaration, in which he exposed, in forcible and indignant terms, the unreasonable demands of the Kirk. "Out of an earnest desire," he said, "to keep peace with the ministers, he had agreed to wave all inquiry into 'past causes,' till the unhappy differences between the civil and ecclesiastical tribunal had been removed by the judgment of a convention of estates and a General Assembly of the ministry. All that he had asked in return was, that his proceedings should not be made a subject of pulpit attack and bitter ecclesiastical railing: instead of listening to which request, they had vilified him in their sermons, accused him of persecution, defended Black, and falsely held him up to his people as the enemy of all godliness. In the face of all such slander and defamation, he now declared to his good subjects, that as it was his determination on the one hand to maintain religion and the discipline of the Church as established by law, so, on the other, he was resolved to enforce upon all his people, ministers of the Kirk as well as others, that obedience to the laws and reverence for the throne, without which no Christian kingdom could hold together. For this purpose certain bonds were in preparation, which the ministers should be required to subscribe, under

[1] Calderwood, p. 351. Spottiswood, p. 425.
[2] Ibid. p. 427.
[3] Calderwood, pp, 356, 360. Spottiswood, p. 426.

the penalty of a sequestration of their property."[1]

Meanwhile, the commissioners having retired from the city, a short breathing time was allowed; and Secretary Lindsay, trusting that the ministers of Edinburgh might now be more tractable than their brethren, prevailed on the king to send for them. As a preliminary to all accommodation, they insisted that the commissioners should be recalled; and the king, relaxing in his rigour, appeared on the point of acceding to their wishes, when some of the "*Cubiculars*," as the lords of the bed-chamber and gentlemen of the household were called, interposed their ill offices to prevent an agreement. These ambitious and intriguing men had long envied and hated the Octavians, and had hoped, under colour of the recent dissensions in the Church, to procure their disgrace and dismissal. Nothing could be more unfavourable to such a plot than peace between the king and the Kirk; nothing more essential to its success than to fan the flame and stir the elements of discord. This they now set about with diabolical ingenuity. They laboured to make the Octavians odious to the party of the Protestant barons and the ministers. They assured them, that all the hot persecution of Mr Black arose from this hydra-headed crew, of whom they knew the leaders to be Papists. They insinuated to the Octavians that the animosity of their enemies in the Kirk was so implacable as to throw their lives into jeopardy; and they abused the king's ear, to whom their office gave them unlimited access, by tales against the citizens of Edinburgh, who mounted guard every night, as they affirmed, over the houses of their ministers, lest their lives should fall a sacrifice to the unmitigable rage of their sovereign.

By these abominable artifices, the single end of which was to destroy the government of the Octavians, the hopes of peace were entirely blasted; and the little lull which had succeeded the retirement of the commissioners was followed by a more terrific tempest than had yet occurred. The king, incensed at the conduct of the citizens and the suspicion which it implied, commanded twenty-four of the most zealous burgesses to leave the capital within six hours; a proceeding which enraged the ministers, whose indignation blazed to the highest pitch when they received an anonymous letter, assuring them that Huntly had been that night closeted with James. The information was false, and turned out to be an artifice of the "*Cubiculars;*" but it had the effect intended, for all was now terror in the Kirk. Balcanquel flew to the pulpit; and after a general discourse on some text of the Canticles, plunged into the present troubles of the Kirk, arraigned the "treacherous forms" of which they had been made the victims; and turning to the noblemen and barons who were his auditors, reminded them, in glowing language, of the deeds of their ancestors in defence of the truth: exhorting them not to disgrace their fathers, but to meet the ministers forthwith in the Little Church. To this quarter so great a crowd now rushed, that the clergy could not make their entrance; but Mr Robert Bruce, pressing forward, at last reached the table where the Protestant barons were seated, and warning them of the imminent perils which hung over their heads, the return of the Papist earls, the persecution of Black, the banishment of the commissioners and the citizens, conjured them to bestir themselves and intercede with the king.[2]

For this purpose, Lords Lindsay and Forbes, with the Lairds of Barganie and Balquhan, and the two ministers, Bruce and Watson, sought the royal presence, then not far off; for the king was at that moment sitting in the Upper Tolbooth with some of his privy-council, while the judges of the Session were assembled in the Lower House. On being admitted with the rest, Bruce informed the monarch that they were sent by the noblemen and barons then convened, to bemoan and avert the dangers threatened to religion. "What dangers?" said James. "I see none; and who dares convene, contrary to

[1] Spottiswood, p. 426.

[2] Spottiswood, p. 427.

my proclamation?"—"Dares!" retorted the fierce Lord Lindsay: "we dare more than that; and shall not suffer the truth to be overthrown, and stand tamely by." As he said this the clamour increased; numbers were thronging unmannerly into the presence-chamber, and the king, starting up in alarm, and without giving any answer, retreated down stairs to the Lower House, where the judges were assembled, and commanded the doors to be shut. The Protestant lords and ministers upon this returned to the Little Kirk, where the multitude had been addressed, during their absence, by Mr Michael Cranston, who had read to them the history of Haman and Mordecai. This story had worked them up to a point that prepared them for any mischief; and when they heard that the king had turned his back upon their messengers, they became furious with rage and disappointment. Some, dreading the worst, desired to separate; but Lindsay's lion voice was heard above the clamour, forbidding them to disperse. Shouts now arose, to force the doors and bring out the wicked Haman; others cried out, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon;" and in the midst of the confusion, an agent of the courtiers, or, as Calderwood terms him, "a messenger of Satan sent by the *Cubiculars*," vociferated, "Armour, armour! save yourselves. Fy, fy! bills and axes!" The people now rose in arms; some rushing one way, some another. Some, thinking the king was laid hands on, ran to the Tolbooth; some, believing that their ministers were being butchered, flew to the Kirk; others thundered with their axes and weapons on the Tolbooth doors, calling for President Seton, Mr Elphinstone, and Mr Thomas Hamilton, to be given up to them, that they might take order with them as abusers of the king and the Kirk. At this moment, had not a brave deacon of the craftsmen, named Wat, with a small guard, beat them back, the gate would have been forced, and none could have answered for the consequences. But at last the provost, Sir Alexander Hume, whom the shouts of the uproar had reached as he lay on a sick bed, seizing his sword, rushed in, all haggard and pale, amongst the citizens, and with difficulty appeased them into a temporary calm.

James, who was greatly alarmed, now sent the Earl of Mar to remonstrate with the ministers, whom he found pacing up and down, disconsolately, behind the church, lamenting the tumult, and excusing their own part. On being remonstrated with by Mar, all that they required, they said, was the abolition of the acts done in prejudice of the Kirk during the last four weeks; that the president, comptroller, and advocate, men suspected in religion, and enemies to the truth, should have no voice in ecclesiastical matters; and that the good citizens who had been banished should be recalled. These demands being reported, the monarch promised to lay them, when put into proper form, before his council; and seizing the moment of tranquillity, ventured to open the doors of the Lower Tolbooth, and accompanied by the provost, bailies, and Octavians, slipt quietly into the street, and proceeded to his palace at Holyrood.

Here at last there was safety; and his courage reviving, James expressed himself with the utmost indignation against the ministers and leaders of the late tumult; vowing that they, the town, the barons, and every living soul connected with the recent disgraceful scenes, should bitterly repent them. These sentiments were encouraged by the councillors; and next morning the king and his whole court, at an early hour, left the city for Linlithgow. Scarcely had they departed when a herald, appearing at the Cross, read a proclamation which struck dismay into the hearts of the people. It described the treasonable uproar of the preceding day, which had been raised by the factious ministers of Edinburgh, who, it stated, after having uttered most seditious speeches in pulpit, had assembled with the noblemen, barons, and others; had sent an irreverent message to their sovereign, persuaded the citizens to take arms, and put his

majesty's life in jeopardy. Such treasonable conduct, it declared, had convinced the king that the capital was no longer a fit place for his own residence, or for the ministration of justice; he had therefore himself left it with his court, and now commanded the lords of Session, sheriffs, and all other officers of justice, to remove themselves forth of the town of Edinburgh, and be ready to repair to such other place as should be appointed. At the same time he ordered all noblemen and barons to depart instantly to their own houses, and to forbear any further assembly till they had received the royal permission.[1]

This proclamation had an immediate effect, and caused a great alteration. Men looked sadly and despondingly on each other. The craftsmen and burgesses foretold the utter decay of their town and trade. All seemed in despair; but nothing could intimidate the Kirkmen; and Mr Robert Bruce, one of their principal leaders, ascending the pulpit, upbraided them with their pusillanimity. "A day," said he, "a day of trial and terror is at hand. The hypocrisy of many, the flagrant iniquity of others, will clearly appear. The trial shall go through all men: from king and queen to council and nobility, from session to barons, from barons to burgesses, from burgesses to the meanest craftsmen, all will be sifted; and sorry am I that I should see such weakness in so many, that ye dare not utter so much as one word for God's glory and the good cause. It is not we that are parties in this cause. No: the quarrel is betwixt a greater Prince and us. We are but silly men and unworthy creatures. But it hath pleased Him who ruleth all things, to set us in this office, and to make us His own mouth, that we should oppose the manifest usurpation intended against His spiritual kingdom; and sorry am I that our cause should be obscured by this late tumult, and that the enemies should be thereby emboldened to pull the crown off Christ's head."[2]

[1] Spottiswood, pp. 429, 430.
[2] Calderwood, p. 366.

After this stirring address, Lord Hamilton was secretly invited to place himself at the head of the godly barons and other gentlemen, who had embraced the cause of the Kirk; and a proposal was made for the excommunication of Seton, the president of the Session, and Hamilton, the lord-advocate; but in the end it was deemed advisable to defer this awful process to the General Assembly, when these offenders might, with greater solemnity, be delivered over to Satan. Meanwhile a fast was proclaimed; and Mr John Welsh, one of the ministers, thundered from one of the city pulpits an extraordinary philippic against the king; taking for his general subject the epistle sent to the angel of the Church at Ephesus. His majesty, he said, had been possessed with a devil; and one devil having been put out, seven worse spirits were entered in his place. He was, in fact, in a state of frenzy; and it was lawful for the subjects to rise against him, and take the sword out of his hand; just as a father of a family, if visited with insanity, might be seized by his children and servants, and tied hand and foot. An execrable doctrine, justly observes Spottiswood, which was yet received by many of the hearers as a sound application.

This insolent attack was scarcely made when Lord Hamilton, who had at first received the messenger of the Kirk with courtesy, suddenly rode to Linlithgow, and put into the king's hands the letter addressed him by the ministers. It was construed into a direct incitement to rebellion; and certainly its terms went far that way. Addressing themselves to this nobleman, the brethren presumed, they said, that his lordship was aware of the long conference between his majesty and them; many concurrings, and as many breaks, in which, at last, the malice of some councillors had come to this, that their stipends were discharged; the commissioners of the General Assembly banished; Mr David Black convicted of treason, and warded; themselves appointed to suffer the like; and now, at last, a great number

of their flock, who had stood in their defence, expelled from the town. They proceeded to state that the people, in this crisis, animated, no doubt, by the Word of God's Spirit, took arms; and, unless restrained by their ministers, would, in their fury, have lighted upon many of the councillors, who were threatening destruction, as they believed, to religion and government. The letter stated, that the godly barons, with other gentlemen who were in the town, had convened themselves; they had taken upon them the "*Patronicy*" of the Kirk and her cause; but they lacked a head, and specially a nobleman to countenance the matter, and with one consent had made choice of Lord Hamilton. "And seeing," so the ministers concluded their inflammatory epistle, "God has given your lordship this honour, we could do no less than to follow His calling, and make it known to you, that with all convenient diligence you might come here, utter your affection to the good cause, and receive the honour which is offered you." [1]

This letter was subscribed by the leading ministers of the Kirk,—Bruce, Balcanquel, Rollock, Balfour, and Watson; but the great nobleman to whom it was addressed, resisted the dangerous pre-eminence, and highly offended the Kirk by now placing it in the king's hands, who was not slow to take advantage of the discovery. In truth, the tumult recently committed by the citizens, and the part which had been acted in it by the clergy, was a prodigious advantage given to the monarch, who quickly perceived it. He was well aware of the difficulty of dealing with the ministers, as long as they confined themselves to their political attacks in the pulpit, and pleaded an independent jurisdiction; but the citizens and bailies were unquestionably amenable to the authority of the crown and the laws. They were, with scarcely a single exception, Protestants; warmly attached to the Kirk, and a principal element in its power. All this the king knew; and when he saw that he had them within his grasp, he determined they should feel the full weight of his resentment. It was in vain that the citizens sought to appease the royal wrath, and dispatched the humblest messages to implore its removal, and invite their sovereign back to his capital. The envoys were refused access; the provost was commanded to imprison the ministers, who were accused of having instigated a tumult which had endangered the life of their prince; the outrage was declared treason by an act of council; the capital was pronounced unsafe; the nobility and gentry interdicted from resorting thither; the inferior judicatories and the supreme court removed; and the ominous answer returned by the king to the citizens, that he meant ere long to come to Edinburgh in person, and let them know that he was their sovereign.

To enforce this, James summoned his Highland nobles with their fierce attendants, and his Border barons with their lawless followers. Dark surmises ran through the court, and soon reached the startled ears of the townsmen, that their city was doomed to indiscriminate pillage; it was to be sacked, perhaps razed, and sown with salt. Will of Kinmont, it was said, was to be let loose upon it; and his name always formidable, and now more notorious from his recent escape, struck terror into the hearts of the burghers. It was in vain that the ministers attempted to rally the courage of their flocks, spoke of excommunicating their enemies in the council, and drew up a bond for the defence of religion. The magistrates refused to subscribe it; the craftsmen, torn between their love of gain and their devotion to sound doctrine, began to look coldly and doubtfully upon their pastors; and the four clergymen, who had taken the most active part in the tumult, dreading an arrest, fled by night to Newcastle.[2] But these were not the days when the artisans and merchants of a feudal capital were subjects of easy plunder. All had arms, and knew well how to use them; and the shops,

[1] Warrender MSS., vol. B. p. 246.

[2] Spottiswood, p. 431.

booths, and warehouses, were soon emptied of their goods, which were stowed away in the strongest houses of the town. The sturdy proprietors then took to their weapons, mounted guard over their stores, and determined that neither "*catherans*" nor borderers should spoil them without a bloody struggle.[1]

On the 1st January, the dreaded entry of the monarch took place. The streets and gates had, early in the morning, been occupied by the various chiefs and clans appointed for the purpose. The provost and magistrates delivered the keys of the city on their knees to the king; professed their deep sorrow for the late tumult, of which, they declared, they were individually guiltless; and solicited the strictest scrutiny into the whole. As to the inflammatory sermons, and the conduct of their ministers who had been recently outlawed, they should, they said, never be readmitted to their charge without the permission of the king; and at the next election of the civic authorities, such persons only should be chosen as had previously been approved of by the crown.[2] James then proceeded to the High Church, heard a sermon from Mr David Lindsay, and made an oration to the people, in which he justified himself, cleared his councillors, and deeply blamed the ministers.[3] He spoke of his own early education in the reformed religion; his solemn determination to maintain it; to extirpate from his realm all unrepentant idolaters, and to provide for the preaching of God's Word, which had been silent in the capital since the flight of those unworthy pastors who had profaned the pulpits by their seditious harangues. Having thus somewhat reassured the trembling citizens, he deemed that he had gone far enough for the present; and not only declined accepting their offers of submission, but at a succeeding convention of estates, held at Holyrood, anew declared the tumult to be treason, intimated his resolution to prosecute the town criminally, and commanded the provost and bailies to enter their persons in ward, within the town of Perth, before the 1st of February; to remain their in durance till acquitted, or found guilty of the uproar.[4] The sword was thus kept suspended over the heads of the unhappy magistrates and their capital; and it was quite apparent that the king, having become convinced of his own strength, was determined to defer the moment of mercy till he had accomplished some great purpose which now filled his mind.

This was nothing less than the establishment of Episcopacy. The recent excesses of the more violent ministers had made the deepest impression upon the monarch; and it was evident to him, that if the principles of independent jurisdiction which they had not hesitated to adopt, were preached and acted upon, there must ensue a perpetual collision between the ecclesiastical and civil authorities. He longed, therefore, to use the words of Spottiswood, to see "a decent order established in the Kirk, which should be consistent with the Word of God, the custom of primitive times, and the laws of the realm;" and he believed that no fitter moment could occur to carry this great object than the present. His first step was to summon a General Assembly of the church to meet at Perth on the last of February. His next was an act of conciliation. The eight councillors who, under the name of Octavians, had, for the last eighteen months, managed the financial department of the state, and indirectly controlled every part of the government, had been especially obnoxious to the Protestant clergy, and to a section of the courtiers and bedchamber lords. They were hated by the ministers, who suspected them to be mostly concealed Roman Catholics; by the *Cubiculars*, as the courtiers were called, because they had curtailed their perquisites, and intro-

[1] Birrel's Diary.
[2] Maitland, vol. ii., p. 1273.
[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Cecil, January 4, 1596.
[4] Spottiswood, p. 433.

duced a strict economy; and the king, by accepting their resignations, believed that he would popularise his intended ecclesiastical innovations.[1] These changes he now prefaced by drawing up and circulating amongst the different synods and presbyteries, no less than fifty-five questions, involving the most important points in dispute between himself and his clergy; not, as he solemnly declared, for the purpose of troubling the peace of the Kirk by thorny disputes, but to have its polity cleared, its corruptions eradicated, and a pleasant harmony established between himself and its ministers.[2] The spirit and tendency of these questions gave great alarm to the brethren. The king inquired whether matters of external ecclesiastical regimen might not be disputed, *salvâ fide et religione;* whether the prince by himself, or the pastors by themselves, or both conjunctly, should establish the acts concerning the government of the Kirk; whether the consent of a majority of the flock, and also of the patron, was necessary in the election of pastors; whether there could be a lawful minister without *impositio manuum;* whether pastors should be permitted to allude by name to councillors and magistrates in the pulpit, or to describe them so minutely as to leave no doubt whom they meant, although the parties so attacked were guiltless of notorious vices, and had not been previously admonished; whether the pastors should be confined to the doctrine directly flowing from his text, or might preach all things on all texts; whether the General Assembly of the Kirk might be convoked without consent of the prince, he being *pius et Christianus Magistratus;* whether it were lawful to excommunicate such Papists as had never professed the reformed faith; whether a Christian prince had power to annul a notoriously unjust sentence of excommunication, and to amend such disorders as might occur either by pastors failing in their duties, or by one jurisdiction usurping the province of another; whether Fasts for general causes might be proclaimed without the command of the prince; whether any causes infringing upon the civil jurisdiction, or interfering with vested private rights, might be disputed and ruled in the ecclesiastical courts; and whether the civil magistrate had not a full right to stay all such proceedings?[3]

These searching interrogatories were received with no inconsiderable dismay by the clergy. They took great offence that their forms of ecclesiastical polity, which they considered irreversibly fixed by act of parliament, and founded, as they contended, on the Word of God, which had been so highly eulogised also by the king in 1592, should be called in question. They saw how acutely the questions had been drawn up; how deeply they touched the independence of the Kirk; what a total revolution and alienation the late excesses of the ministers had occasioned in the mind of the sovereign, and how earnest and determined he seemed in the whole matter.

All this demanded instant vigilance and resistance. Many private conferences were held; and in the end of February the brethren of the synod of Fife convened at St Andrews, where, after "tossing of the king's questions for sundry days," they drew up their replies, which, as was to be expected, ruled everything in favour of the Kirk, and resisted every claim on the part of the king. Some of these answers are remarkable, and seem to shew that the principles then laid down were incompatible with the existence of civil government. Thus, the first question, Whether matters concerning the external government of the Kirk might not be debated *salvâ fide et religione?* was met by a peremptory negative; on the second, they were equally positive that the king had no voice in the discussion or establishment of any acts relating to Church government. All the acts of the Kirk (so was their response worded) ought to be established by the Word

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, Jan. 13, 1596-7.
[2] Spottiswood, p. 434.
[3] Spottiswood, pp. 435, 436.

of God. Of this Word the ordinary interpreters were the pastors and doctors of the Kirk; the extraordinary expounders, such as were called for in times of corruption, were the prophets, or such men as were endowed by God with extraordinary gifts; and kings and princes had nothing to do but to ratify and vindicate, by their civil sanctions, that which these pastors and prophets had authoritatively declared.[1] As to the indecent and scurrilous practice of inveighing against particular men and councillors by name in the pulpit, they defended its adoption by what they termed apostolic authority. "The canon," said they, "of the Apostle is clear: 'They that sin publicly, rebuke publicly, that the rest may fear;' and so much the more if the public sin be in a public person." On other points they were equally clear and decided in favour of their own practices and pretensions. All things, they contended, might be spoken on all texts; and if the minister travelled from his subject, he was only following the express directions of Paul to Timothy. The General Assembly might be convened without the authority of the king, because the officers of the Kirk received their place and warrant directly from Christ, and not from any temporal prince; and the acts passed in that Assembly were undoubtedly valid, although carried against the royal will. On this question their reasoning was extraordinary: "The king," they contended, "should consent to, and give a legal sanction to all acts passed in the Assembly; and why? Because the acts of the Assembly have sufficient authority from Christ, who has promised, that whatever shall be agreed upon on earth by two or three convened in his name, shall be ratified in heaven,—a warrant to which no temporal king or prince can lay claim: and so," it continues, "the acts and constitutions of the Kirk are of higher authority than those of any earthly king; yea, they should command and overrule kings, whose greatest honour should be to be members, nursing fathers, and servants to this king Christ Jesus, and his house and queen the Kirk."[2] To pursue the answers is unnecessary, enough having been given to shew their general tendency. But the courage of the synod of Fife, by whom these stout replies were drawn up, did not pervade the whole body of the Kirk; and the king, who managed the affair with his usual acuteness and dexterity, succeeded in procuring a majority in the General Assembly, and ultimately carrying his own views.

This James appears to have effected by holding out hopes of preferment to those who were wavering, and packing the General Assembly with a large majority of north-country ministers, who were generally esteemed more lukewarm Presbyterians and more devoted courtiers than their lowland brethren. Sir Patrick Murray, a gentleman of the bed-chamber, had been sent for this purpose into the north; and was so successful in his mission, that when the Assembly met at Perth, the king found them in a more placable and conciliatory mood than could have been anticipated. It was declared, after some sharp discussion, a lawful Assembly; having power not only to debate, but to conclude such questions as should be brought before them. The royal commissioners, Sir John Cockburn, Sir John Preston, and Mr Edward Bruce, then presented thirteen articles, which embraced the principal points of dispute already included by the king in his original queries; and a committee of the Assembly having been chosen to consider them, they gave in, next morning, a series of answers, which James pronounced unsatisfactory, and requested the members of Assembly to meet the estates for the purpose of a more full discussion. When they appeared, he observed that they must be well aware of the object for which he had desired their attendance. "My purpose," said he, "in calling you together, is to amend such things as are amiss, and to take away the questions that may move trouble afterwards. If you, for your parts, be willing to have matters

[1] Calderwood, pp. 382, 383.

[2] Calderwood, p. 386.

righted, things may yet go well. I claim nothing but what is due to every Christian king; that is, to be *Custos et Vindex Disciplinæ*. Corruptions are crept in, and more are daily growing, by this liberty that preachers take in the application of their doctrine, and censuring everything that is not to their mind. This I must have amended; for such discourses serve only to move sedition, and raise tumults. Let the truth of God be taught in the chair of truth, and wickedness be reprobated; but in such sort as the offender may be bettered, and vice made more odious. To rail against men in pulpit, and express their names, as we know was done of late, there being no just cause, and to make the Word of God, which is ordained to guide men in the way of salvation, an instrument of sedition, is a sin, I am sure, beyond all other that can be committed on earth. Hold you within your limits, and I will never blame you, nor suffer others to work you any vexation. The civil government is committed to me. It is not your subject; nor are ye to meddle with it."[1]

This peremptory mode of address overawed the Assembly; and after protesting that they had convened in that place only to evince their obedience to the sovereign, and in nowise consenting to submit matters ecclesiastical to a civil judicatory, they withdrew to their ordinary place of meeting, and prepared their amended answers; with which the king declared himself satisfied for the present. And he had good reason to be so; for he had already gained some principal points. It was agreed that the monarch, either by himself or his commissioners, might propose to the General Assembly any reformation or amendment in ecclesiastical matters connected with the external government of the Kirk; that no unusual conventions should be held amongst pastors without the royal consent; that the acts of the privy council, or the laws passed by the three estates, should not be attacked or discussed in the pulpit, without remedy having been first sought from the king; that in the principal towns of the realm no minister should be chosen without consent of the king, and of the flock; and that no man should be by name rebuked in the pulpit, unless he had fled from justice, or were under sentence of excommunication.[2]

James's next step was to reconcile the Catholic lords to the Kirk; and he was here equally successful. He had already written a peremptory letter to Huntly, informing him that the time was come when he must either embrace the Protestant faith, remain in Scotland, and be restored to his honours and his estates; or leave his country for ever, if, as the king expressed it in his letter, his conscience were so "*kittle*"[3] as to refuse these conditions; in which case, James added, "Look never to be a Scotsman again!" The letter concluded with these solemn words:—

"Deceive not yourself, to think that by lingering of time, your wife and your allies shall ever get you better conditions. I must love myself and my own estate better than all the world; and think not that I will suffer any professing a contrary religion to dwell in this land."[4]

The conditions presented to Huntly, Angus, and Errol, were, that after conference with the Presbyterian ministers, who should be careful to instruct them in the truth, they should acknowledge the Kirk of Scotland to be a true Church, become members of it, hear the Word, receive the sacraments, and be obedient to its discipline; and that they should banish all Jesuits and seminary priests from their company and estates, and subscribe the Confession of Faith. On the meeting of the General Assembly at Dundee, (10th May 1597,) the brethren who had been appointed for this purpose, reported that the earls had recanted their errors, subscribed the Confession

[1] Spottiswood, p. 440.

[2] Spottiswood, p. 441.

[3] That is, so ticklish or tender.

[4] Original in the king's hand, Warrender MSS. vol. A. p. 169. Printed by Spottiswood, with some words and sentences omitted.

of Faith, and so completly fulfilled all the conditions required of them, that nothing more remained, than the pleasing duty of receiving them once more into communion with the Kirk. But, at the very moment of reconciliation, it was found that Mr James Gordon, a Jesuit, had glided in disguise into the country of Huntly, and was busy in shaking his resolution; whilst a daring Catholic baron, named Barclay of Ladyland, seized and fortified Ailsa, a small island in the shape of a huge, rugged rock, off the coast of Ayr, with the design of delivering it to the Spaniards, who had promised to make a descent in that quarter. This desperate enterprise was defeated by Mr Andrew Knox, minister of Paisley, whose prowess had been shewn some five years before this, in seizing George Kerr with the Spanish Blanks.[1] With like success, this devoted member of the Kirk, having discovered Barclay's plot, girded on his sword; and taking boat, with a few daring assistants, attacked the traitor on his rock, and reduced him to such extremity, that rather than be taken alive he rushed into the sea, and in one moment choked both himself and his treason.[2]

This reverse confirmed the Catholic lords in their convictions; and the ceremony of their reconcilation to the Kirk, and restoration to their estates and honours, took place at Aberdeen in the end of June. As it was an event particularly acceptable to the king, and considered a great triumph by the Kirk, the proceedings were conducted with much solemnity. After a strict fast, held on Saturday the 25th of June, on which day the three earls, Huntly, Angus, and Errol, made up all deadly quarrels, and shook hands with their enemies, mutually imploring and receiving forgiveness; the congregation assembled on Sunday the 26th in the Old Kirk at Aberdeen, which was crowded with the noblemen, barons, and common people. In the main aisle was a table for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and immediately before the sermon, the three earls rose from their places, and subscribed the Confession of Faith. The sermon followed, preached by Mr John Gledstanes; after which the earls rose, and with a loud voice made open confession of their late defection and apostasy, professing their present conviction of the truth of the Presbyterian faith, and their resolution to remain steadfast in the same. Huntly then declared before God, his majesty, and the Kirk, his deep penitence for the murder of the Earl of Moray; after which the three noble delinquents were absolved from the sentence of excommunication, and received by the ministers, the royal commissioner, and the provost and magistrates, into the bosom of the Kirk. A person in the dress of a penitent now threw himself on his knees before the pulpit: it was the Laird of Gicht, who implored pardon for his supporting Bothwell, and entreated to be released from his sentence of excommunication. All this was granted. The repentant earls then received the sacrament after the Presbyterian form; solemnly swore to keep good order in their wide and wild territories, executing justice, destroying "bangsters," and shewing themselves, in all respects, "good justiciars;" and, on the succeeding day, Marchmont Herald proclaimed their reconcilation by sound of trumpet at the Cross, which was hung with tapestry, and surrounded by multitudes, who shouted their joy, drank their healths, and tossed their glasses in the air.[3]

This success gave strength to the king's government, and encouraged James to go forward with his great ecclesiastical project; but he proceeded with caution, and took care not to alarm the Kirk by prematurely disclosing the full extent of his reforms. He had now secured in his interest a large party of the ministers; but the elements of democracy, and the hatred of anything approaching to a hierarchy, were still deeply rooted in the General

[1] *Supra*, p. 187.

[2] Spottiswood, p. 445. MS., State-paper Office, without date.

[3] Thomas Mollison to Mr Robert Paip, Aberdeen, June 28, 1597. Analecta Scotica, p. 299.

Assembly, and in the hearts of the people. Mr Andrew Melvil, principal of the college of St Andrews, a man singularly learned, ready in debate, sarcastic, audacious, and overbearing, led the popular party, with his nephew, James Melvil, who was warmly attached to the same principles, but of a gentler spirit. Many others assisted them; and the king, anxious to get rid of their opposition, proposed that, instead of the whole Assembly continuing its proceedings, a general commission should be granted to some of the wisest amongst the brethren, who might consult and co-operate with the monarch upon various matters of weight which concerned "not only particular flocks, but the whole estate and body of the Kirk."[1] This was agreed to. Fourteen ministers were chosen, most of whom were known to be favourable to the views of the court; and these, whom Calderwood the popular historian of the Kirk stigmatises as the "*king's led horse*," convened soon after at Falkland, where they summoned before them the presbytery of St Andrews, and gave a specimen of their new power, by reversing a judgment pronounced by the presbytery of St Andrews, and removing from their charge two ministers named Wallace and Black, who had profaned their pulpits by personal attack and vituperation. This was followed by a strict and searching visitation of the university of St Andrews, the stronghold of its rector, Mr Andrew Melvil, who in his office of principal had, as the king conceived, been too busy in disseminating amongst the students his favourite principles of ministerial parity and popular power. A new rector was elected; a certain mode of teaching prescribed to the several professors; and a more strict economy introduced into the disposal of the rents of the university, by the appointment of a financial council.

During the summer and autumn, James was busily occupied with the trial of witches, and an expedition to the Borders; in which last he acted with great energy. Fourteen of the most notorious offenders were taken and hanged; thirty-six of the principal barons, who had encouraged their outrages, seized and brought prisoners to the capital; and Lord Ochiltree left as lieutenant and warden over the disturbed districts. Parliament now assembled, and opened with some proceedings on the part of the king, which shewed an alienation from England. In an oration to his nobility, he dwelt on the wrongs he had received in the execution of his mother; the interruption in the payment of his gratuity; the scornful answers returned to his temperate remonstrance; the unjust imputations of Elizabeth, who accused him of exciting Poland and Denmark against her, and fostering rebellion in Ireland. But what had most deeply offended him, was the attempt made recently in the English parliament to defeat his title to the throne of that kingdom; a subject upon which, owing to the daily reports of the shattered health of the queen, he had become more keenly sensitive than ever.[2] Against all this it was evident he now resolved to be timely on his guard; but in the meantime his mind was full of that great plan which had so long occupied it—the establishment of the order of bishops. For this all was now ripe; and when the commissioners of the Kirk laid their petition before parliament, one of its requisitions was found to be as follows:—"That the ministers, as representing the church and third estate of the kingdom, might be admitted to have a voice in parliament."

It was at once seen that under this application, which had been so artfully managed to come not from the king but the Kirk, the first step was made for restoring the order of bishops. The monarch, indeed, did not now deny it: he knew that he had a majority in the Assembly, and looked for an easy victory; but something of the ancient courage and fervour of Presbyterianism remained. Ferguson, now venerable from his age and ex-

[1] Calderwood, p. 409.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, George Nicolson to Sir R. Cecil, December 15, 1597.

perience, lifted up his testimony against the project for bringing his brethren into parliament. It was, he affirmed, a court stratagem; and if they suffered it to succeed, would be as fatal, from what it carried within its bowels, as the horse to the unhappy Trojans. "Let the words," said he, "of the Dardan prophetess ring in your ears, '*Equo ne credite Teucri!*'" Andrew Melvil, whom the court party had in vain attempted to exclude, argued against the petition in his wonted rapid and powerful style; and John Davison, tearing away from the king's speech, and the arguments of his adherents, the thin veil with which their ultimate design was covered, pointed, in a strain of witty and biting irony, to the future bench of bishops, and their primate at their head. "Busk him, busk him," said he, "as bonnilie as ye can, and fetch him in as fairly as ye will—we ken him weel eneuch; we see the horns of his mitre."[1] But these were insulated efforts, and had so little effect, that the king, without difficulty, procured an act to be passed, which declared, "That such pastors and ministers as the crown provided to the place and dignity of a bishop, abbot, or other prelate, should have voice in parliament as freely as any other ecclesiastical prelate had in any former age."[2]

A General Assembly was soon after convened, in which the subject was solemnly argued in the king's presence, first by a committee of brethren, and afterwards by the whole church.[3] As a preparation for this, James had tried every method of conciliation. He had extended his forgiveness to the ministers of Edinburgh for their part in the late tumult: he had restored their privileges, and the comfort of his royal presence and pardon, to the magistrates and the citizens of the capital; not, however, without having first imposed on them a heavy fine. To those stern and courageous supporters of the Presbyterian establishment, whose presence he dreaded, other methods were used. Mr Andrew Melvil, who pleaded a right to be present in the Assembly, as he had a "doctoral charge in the Kirk," was commanded, under pain of treason, to leave the city; others, whose subserviency was doubtful, were wearied out and induced to retire by lengthened preliminary discussions; and at last the king opened his great project in a studied harangue. He dwelt on his constant care to adorn and favour the Kirk, to remove controversies, restore discipline, and increase its patrimony. All, he said, was in a fair road to success; but in order to ensure it and perfect the reform, it was absolutely requisite that ministers should have a vote in parliament, without which the Kirk could not be saved from falling into poverty and contempt. "I mean not," said he, emphatically, "to bring in Papistical or Anglican bishops, but only that the best and wisest of the ministry should be selected by your Assembly to have a place in council and parliament, to sit upon their own affairs, and not to stand always at the door like poor supplicants, utterly despised and disregarded."[4] A keen argument followed. Mr James Melvil, Davison, Bruce, Carmichael, and Aird, all devoted and talented ministers, spoke against the project, and denounced it in the strongest language. On the other side, the brunt of the battle, in its defence, fell on Gledstanes, and the king himself, no mean adept in ecclesiastical polemics; but, if we may believe Calderwood, the main element of success was the presence of the northern brethren, whom this historian describes as a sad, subservient rabble, led by Mr Gilbert Bodie, "a drunken Orkney ass," whose name described their character: all being for the body, with small regard to the spirit.[5] In the end the question was carried by a majority of ten: the Assembly finding that it was expedient for the good of the Kirk that the ministers, as the third estate of the realm, should have a vote in parliament; that the

[1] Calderwood, p. 415. Busk, dress; bonnilie, prettily; ken, know; eneuch, enough.
[2] Spottiswood, p. 450.
[3] March 7, 1597-8.
[4] Calderwood, p. 413.
[5] Ibid., p. 419.

same number, being fifty-one or thereby, should be chosen, as were wont of old, in time of the Papistical Kirk, to be bishops, abbots, and priors; and that their election should belong partly to the king and partly to the Kirk.[1]

This resolution was adopted in March 1597–8; but the final establishment of Episcopacy did not take place till more than a twelvemonth after this, in a General Assembly convoked at Montrose on the 28th March 1600. On that occasion, it was decided that the king should choose each bishop, for every place that was to be filled, out of a "leet" or body of six, selected by the Kirk. Various caveats, or conditions, were added, to secure the Kirk against any abuse of their powers by these new dignitaries. They were to propound nothing in parliament, in name of the Kirk, without its special warrant and direction. They were, at every General Assembly, to give an account of the manner in which they had executed their commission; they were to be contented with such part of their benefices as the king had assigned for their living; to eschew dilapidation; to attend faithfully on their individual flocks; to claim no higher power than the rest of their brethren in matters of discipline, visitation, and other points of ecclesiastical government; and, lastly, to be as obedient to authority, and amenable to censure in all presbyteries and provincial or General Assemblies, as the humblest minister of the Kirk.[2] As to the names of these new dignitaries, the word bishop was apparently so odious and repugnant to the people, that the king did not deem it prudent to insist on its adoption; and the brethren unanimously advised that they should not be called bishops, but commissioners. James was too well satisfied with the reality of his success in carrying his great scheme to so prosperous an issue, to cavil at this shadow of opposition; and the subject was handed over to the next General Assembly. The feelings with which this triumph of prelatical principles was regarded by the sincere and stern adherents of Puritanism and parity, will be best understood by this brief extract from the work of one of its ablest advocates, the historian Calderwood: "Thus," says he, "the Trojan horse, the Episcopacy, was brought in, covered with *caveats*, that the danger might not be seen; which, notwithstanding, was seen of many, and opponed unto; considering it to be better to hold thieves at the door, than to have an eye unto them in the house, that they steal not: and, indeed, the event declared that their fear was not without just cause; for those commissioners voters in parliament, afterwards bishops, did violate their *caveats* as easily as Sampson did the cords wherewith he was bound."[3]

CHAPTER X.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1597–8—1600.

HAVING thus continuously traced the establishment in Scotland of this limited episcopacy, we must look back for a moment on the civil history of the country. This was not marked by any great or striking events. There was no external war, and no internal rebellion or commotion; and the suc-

[1] Calderwood, pp. 420, 421.
[2] Calderwood, p. 441.
[3] Ibid.

cess which had attended all the late measures of the king produced a tranquillity in the country, which had the best effects on its general prosperity. James had triumphed over the extreme license and democratic movements of the Kirk; had restrained the personal attacks of its pulpit; defined, with something of precision, the limits between the civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions; evinced an anxiety to raise the character and usefulness of the clergy, by granting them a fixed provision; and added consideration and dignity to the Presbyterian polity, by giving it a representation in the great council of the country. He had, on the other hand, shewn equal wisdom and determination in his conduct to the Roman Catholic earls. None could say that he had acted a lukewarm part to religion. These nobles remained in the country, and had been restored to their estates and honours solely because they were reconciled to the Church. According to the better principles of our own times, he had acted with extraordinary severity and intolerance; but even the highest and hottest Puritan of these unhappy days could not justly accuse him of indifference. He had, moreover, strengthened his aristocracy by healing its wounds, removing or binding up the feuds which tore it, and restoring to it three of its greatest members, Huntley, Angus, and Errol. He had punished, with exemplary severity, the tumult which had been excited in his capital, and read a lesson of obedience to the magistrates and middle orders, which they were not likely to forget. Lastly, he had, in a personal expedition, reduced his borders to tranquillity; and in his intercourse with England, had shewn that, whilst he was determined to preserve peace, he was equally resolved to maintain his independence, and to check that spirit of restless intrigue and interference in which the English ambassadors at the Scottish court had, for so many years, indulged with blameable impunity. Sir Robert Bowes, who had long filled that difficult and dangerous office, had recently died at Berwick, a victim apparently to its anxieties; and having undergone, during his devoted services, the same trials of penury and neglect which, with scarcely one exception, seem to have been the portion of his royal mistress's ambassadors and diplomatic agents.[1] On the 11th of May he had written to his sovereign, imploring his recall, and lamenting that his decay in health, and weakness in body and estate, unfitted him for farther labour: but his remonstrance was ineffectual; and it was not till nearly six months after, that an order arrived, permitting him to retire, and naming Sir William Bowes as his successor. The release, however, came too late. He was then unable to stand from weakness; and he only reached Berwick to expire.[2] The duties of his office, in the meantime, devolved upon Mr George Nicolson, his secretary, a man of ability, whose letters contain much that is valuable in the history of the times.

On the arrival of Sir William Bowes at the Scottish court, he found the king's mind entirely occupied by one great subject—his title to the English throne after the death of the queen. On this point the tranquillity from other cares now gave James full leisure for thought; and he evinced an extreme sensitiveness in everything connected with it. Reports of speeches against his right of succession, in the

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir Robert Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, May 11, 1597.

In the last letter but one which Sir Robert Bowes addressed to Cecil from Edinburgh, there is this pathetic passage:—"Her majesty's gracious compassion taken of me, and of my weakness, is great comfort unto me in my present distress, wherein I now lie, at the seat of God's mercy, and at the point of life, death, sickness, or recovery; in which as I shall fare you shall be shortly advertised. For albeit I had intended this day to have entered my journey towards Berwick, yet, by the advice of my friends, and in respect of my weakness disabling me to stand without help, I have agreed to defer this journey until to-morrow." MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir R. Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, October 31, 1597.

[2] His last letter is written from Berwick to Sir R. Cecil, on November 6, 1597. He died on the 16th of the same month. In the State-paper Office is preserved a fly-leaf, with a printed epitaph on Sir Bowes, by Mr William Fowler, secretary to Queen Anne of Denmark.

English parliament; books written in favour of the claim of the Infanta; intrigues of pretenders at home; the jealousy with which the Catholics regarded his reconciliation with the Kirk; the suspicion with which the Kirk observed his favour to the Catholics: all these thorny matters perpetually haunted and harrassed him. From his observations, the ambassador dreaded that the royal mind was beginning to be alienated from England; and in his first interview James certainly expressed himself with some bitterness against Elizabeth. The expostulations addressed to him by his good sister, he said, were unnecessarily sharp. She accused him of diminished friendliness, of foreign predilections, of credulity and forwardness; but he must retort these epithets, for he had found herself too ready to believe what was untrue, and to condemn him unheard. It was true that, when he saw other competitors for the crown of England endeavouring in every way to advance their own titles, and even making personal applications to the queen, he had begun to think it time to look to his just claim, and to interest his friends in his behalf. It was with this view he had required assistance from his people to furnish ambassadors to various foreign powers. This, surely, he was entitled to do: but anything which had been reported of him beyond this was false; and his desire to entertain all kindly offices with his good sister of England continued as strong as it had been during his whole life.[1] Elizabeth, however, was not satisfied: she still suspected that the Scottish court was inimical to England; and these suspicions were increased by the letters of Nicolson her agent. James was said to be much guided by the opinions of Elphinstone, secretary of state, who was little attached to English interests. There was the warmest friendship between the Scottish queen, Anne of Denmark, and the Countess of Huntley, a devoted Catholic. They often slept in the same bed; and this favoured lady, as Nicolson quaintly expressed it, had the "plurality of her majesty's kisses."[2] The two young princesses were entrusted to Lady Livingstone, a Catholic; many things, in short, concurred to show, that although appearances were preserved, that the king might not forfeit his English "gratuity," cordiality was at an end. At this moment a strange circumstance occurred, which exasperated the feelings of both monarchs. A miscreant, named Valentine Thomas, accused James of employing him in a plot against the life of Elizabeth; and it was at first whispered, and afterwards more plainly asserted at the Scottish court, that the queen, though she did not choose to speak openly, believed the accusation. Some dark expressions which she used in a letter to the king seemed to countenance the idea; and it was certain that she had employed Sir Edward Coke, Sir Francis Bacon, and other judges, in the investigation. James resented this, and insisted on explanations. It was needless in him, he said, to disclaim "such vile intended murder;" but he demanded the fullest investigation, and the severest punishment of the wretch who had so foully slandered him. He would proclaim it as false to all the world by sound of trumpet, by open challenge, in any number; yea, of a king to a king! When his late ambassador to England attempted to pacify him, he struck him on the breast, and said he was sure there was a chain of Elizabeth's under his doublet. It was in vain that, to appease him, the Queen of England wrote a letter with her own hand, in which she assured him, that she was not "of so viperous a nature" as to harbour a thought against him; and that the deviser of such abominable slander should have his deserts.[3] Even this was not enough. The accusation had been public: the depositions of

1 MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir William Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, February 1, 1597–8.

2 MS., State-paper Office, Occurrences, February 2, 1597–8.

3 MS. Letter, State-paper Office, May 11, 1598, Nicolson to Burghley. Ibid., Royal Letters, Scotland, Elizabeth to James, July 1, 1598.

the villain remained uncancelled: who could say what use might not be made of them against his future rights, and to prejudice him in the hearts of the English people? Here was the sore point; and James did not cease to remonstrate till he had extorted from the queen a solemn and formal refutation of the whole story.

The subject of his title, indeed, had kept the monarch, for the last three years, in a state of perpetual and irritable activity. He encouraged authors to write upon the question; and jurisconsults, heralds, and genealogists, made their harvest of his anxiety. Monsieur Jessè, a French literary adventurer, who in 1596 visited the Scottish court, was made Historiographe au Roi d'Escosse, and commanded to "*blaw abroad*" Secretary Elphinstone's discourse on his majesty's title. Walter Quin, an Irish poet and scholar, drew up a work in Latin on the same subject. Monsieur Damon, another Frenchman, corrected it; and the king sent the manuscript to Waldegrave, his printer, who, in an agony, declared to Nicolson, that he must either print it, and irrecoverably offend his gracious sovereign Queen Elizabeth, or refuse at the peril of his life. Nor was this all: James was suddenly seized with the most sensitive feelings on the subject of his royal mother's memory. His claims came through her; and slander on the Queen of Scots might taint the transmitted title. Spenser, as it was asserted, had glanced at her under the character of Duessa in his Fairy Queen; and the Scottish secretary of state insisted that *Edward* Spenser, (the diplomatist did not even know the immortal poet's name,) should be severely punished. Quin, too, came to the rescue, and wrote an answer to Spenser; whilst "Dickson," an English pedagogue, who taught the Art of Memory, forsook his *ferula*, and found in Scotland a more profitable employment in answering the famous Treatise of Doleman, or rather Father Persons, from materials furnished by the king himself.[1]

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, February 25, 1597-8. MS., Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, Balcarres Papers, vol. vii., pp. 26, 29. The king to the secretary.

These constant cares were only interrupted by the alarming increase of witches and sorcerers, who were said to be swarming in thousands in the kingdom; and for a moment all other cares were forgotten in the intensity with which the monarch threw himself once more into his favourite subject. But a shocking discovery put an end to this dreadful inquisition. An unhappy creature, named Aitken, was seized on suspicion, put to torture, and in her agony confessed herself guilty, named some associates, and offered to purge the country of the whole crew, if she were promised her life. It was granted her; and she declared that she knew witches at once by a secret mark in their eyes, which could not possibly be mistaken. The tale was swallowed. She was carried for months from town to town throughout the country, and in this diabolical circuit accused many innocent women, who, on little more than the evidence of a look, were tried and burnt. At last suspicion was roused. A woman, whom she had convicted of having the devil's eyemark, was disguised, and, after an interval, again brought before her: she acquitted her. The experiment was repeated with like success; and the miserable creature, falling on her knees, confessed that torture had made her a liar, both against herself and others. This, as it well might, brought the royal inquisitionist of sorcery, and his civil and ecclesiastical assistants, to their senses. The Commission of Inquiry was recalled, and all proceedings against the witches discharged, till the parliament should have determined the form and evidence to be adopted in their trial.[2]

Everything was now tranquil in the southern part of the kingdom; and the whole estate, to use Nicolson's expression to Cecil, so "marvellous quiet,"[3] that the king had leisure to

[2] Spottiswood, p. 448. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Cecil, August 15, 1597. Same to same, September 5, 1597.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, Nov. 20, 1598.

attend to an important and long-neglected subject—the condition of the Highlands and Isles. It had, for some time, been James's intention to visit these remote districts in person, and, as usual, to overawe them by the terror of the royal name, backed by an army and a fleet; but year after year had passed, and nothing was done. His impoverished finances, his quarrel with the Kirk, his entanglements with the Papist earls, his embassies to foreign courts on the subject of his title,—all these engrossed his attention; and the fragments of leisure which remained were filled up by the witches, and a visit made to Scotland by the Duke of Holstein, the brother of his queen, which seems to have thrown the court into a perpetual whirl of pageantry, intoxication, and masquerade. The people, according to Nicolson, groaned at the expense; and his majesty was much distempered both in his privy purse and his digestion.[1] But these revels and potations had at last an end: the joyous Dane took leave; and the royal mind, relapsing into sobriety, turned to the Isles and Donald Gorm Macdonald. This potent Highland chieftain had recently made advances to Elizabeth; and it is not uninteresting to remark the stateliness with which a prince amongst the northern *vikingr* approached the English Semiramis. He styled himself Lord of the Isles of Scotland, and chief of the clan Donnel Irishmen; and after a proud enumeration of the petty island princes and chiefs who were ready to follow him in all his enterprises, he offered, upon certain "*reasonable motives and considerations*," to embrace the service of the Queen of England, and persuade the Isles to throw off all allegiance to the Scottish crown. He and his associates were ready, they declared, on a brief warning, to stir up rebellion throughout all the bounds of the mainland, to "*fasche*"[2] his majesty, and weary the whole estates; to create a necessity for new taxation, and thus disgust all classes of his subjects. To induce Elizabeth to embrace these proposals, Donald informed the queen, that he knew the secret history of the Scottish king's intercourse with her arch-rebel Tyrone, and could lay before her the whole intrigues of the Catholic earls lately reconciled to the Kirk, but "meaning nothing less in their hearts than that which they showed outwardly to the world." He would disclose, also, he said, the secret history of the Spanish practices in Scotland; and prove with what activity the northern Jesuits and seminary priests had been weaving their meshes, and pushing forward "their diabolical, pestiferous, and antichristian courses;" which he, Donald Gorm Macdonald, protested before God and his angels he detested with his whole soul. All this he was ready to do upon "good deservings and honest courtesies," to be offered him by the Queen of England; to whose presence he promised to repair upon a moment's warning.[3]

What answer was given by the English queen to these generous and disinterested proposals does not appear; although the letter of Donald Gorm, who made it, is marked in many places by Burghley with the trembling hand of sickness and old age. It is probable, that under the term "*honest courtesies*," more substantial rewards were found to be meant than Elizabeth was willing to bestow; and that the perpetual feuds, massacres, and conspiracies which occurred amongst these Highland chiefs and their followers, disgusted this princess, and shook her confidence in any treaties or alliances proposed by such savage auxiliaries. It was in one of these barbarous plots that Maclean of Duart, a firm friend of Elizabeth, with whose warlike exploits we are already acquainted, met his death;"[4] being treacherously slain in Isla, by his nephew, Sir James Macdonald, who persuaded him to visit the island; alleging, as a pretext, his

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, June 9, 1598.

[2] Trouble.

[3] MS., State-paper Office, endorsed by Burghley. "Donald Gorm Macdonald," March 1598.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Sir R. Cecil, Aug. 10, 1598. *Supra*, pp. 223, 236.

desire to make an amicable settlement of their differences. So little did the brave Lord of Duart suspect any foul play, that he came to the meeting without armour, in a silk dress, and with only a rapier at his side. Along with him were his second son, and the best of his kin, in their holiday garb, and with little other arms than their hunting-knives and boar spears; but although set upon by an ambush of nearly seven hundred men, they made a desperate defence. Maclean, a man of herculean strength, slew three of the Macdonalds at the first onset. When he saw there was no hope, he commanded his son, who fought beside him, to fly, and live to avenge him;[1] but the chief himself, and a little knot of his clansmen, stood shoulder to shoulder, and were not cut down till after fifty of their assailants had fallen.

The death of this great chief was little resented by the king, for James had long been jealous of his dealings with Elizabeth, and his bitter hostility to Huntley; whilst, at this moment, Sir James Macdonald of Dunluce, his murderer, was in high favour at the Scottish court.[2] This Macdonald, known in Irish history as James Macsorlie, had been long a thorn in the side of England, stirring up rebellion in Ireland, and offering his services to James as an active partisan both in Spanish and Scottish affairs. Macsorlie seems to have been a perfect specimen of those Scoto-Hebridean barons who so often concealed the ferocity of the Highland freebooter under the polished exterior which they had acquired by an occasional residence in the low country. It was his pleasure sometimes to join the court at Falkland or Holyrood, mingle in its festivities, give rich presents to the queen and her ladies, outshine the gayest, and fascinate all observers by the splendour of his tastes and the elegance of his manners;[3] but suddenly would come a message from some Highland ally, and Macsorlie flew back to his native islands, where, the moment his foot touched the heather, the gay courtier became a rampant and blood-bolstered savage. Macsorlie had, for years, been the ally of Tyrone, and the soul of the resistance in Ireland; and Elizabeth resented the favour shewn him by James; who replied, "That if his convicted traitors, Bothwell and Colvile, walked the streets of her capital, he was as free to entertain an island chief who owed her no allegiance, and whose assistance was useful to him in reducing the remote Highland districts which had insolently assumed independence."[4]

So dreadful, indeed, was now the state of those portions of his dominions, that, to prevent an utter dissevering from the Scottish crown, something must be done; and many were the projects suggested. At one time the king resolved to proceed to the disturbed districts in person, and fix his head-quarters in Kentire; at another, a deputy was to be sent, armed with regal powers; and twice the Duke of Lennox was nominated to this arduous office.[5] The old plan, too, might have been repeated, of granting a royal commission to one or other of the northern *Reguli*, who were ever prepared, under the plea of loyalty, to strengthen their own hands, and exterminate their brethren; but this, as had been often felt before, was to abandon the country to utter devastation; and a more pacific and singular policy was now adopted. An association of Lowland barons, chiefly from Fife, took a lease from the crown of the Isle of Lewis, for which they agreed, after seven years' possession, to give the king an annual-rent of one hundred and forty chalders of victual; and came under an obligation to *conquer* their farm at their own charges.

[1] The present Earl Compton, eldest son of the Marquis of Northampton, is descended, through his mother, the late amiable and accomplished Lady Compton, from this second son.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, Aug. 10, 1598.

[3] Analecta Scotica, p. 105, Sir John Skene to the Lord Secretary.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, August 16, 1598.

[5] Gregory's History of the Western Highlands and Isles of Scotland, pp. 267, 283.

Another company of noblemen and gentlemen in Lothian offered, under a similar agreement, to subdue Skye. And this kind of feudal joint-stock company actually commenced their operations with a force of six hundred soldiers, and a motley multitude of farmers, ploughmen, artificers, and pedlars. But the Celtic population and their haughty chiefs could not consent to be handed over, in this wholesale fashion, to the tender mercies and agricultural lectures of a set of Saxon adventurers. The Lowland barons arrived, only to be attacked with the utmost fury, and to have the leases of their farms, in the old Douglas phrase, written on their own skins with steel pens and bloody ink. For a time, however, they continued the struggle; and having entered into alliance with some of the native chiefs, fought the Celts with their own weapons, and more than their own ferocity. Instead of agricultural or pastoral produce, importations of wool, or samples of grain, from the infant colony, there was sent to the Scottish court a ghastly cargo of twelve human heads in sacks; and it was hoped that, after such an example of severity, matters might succeed better. But the settlers were deceived. After a feeble and protracted struggle of a few years, sickness and famine, perils by land and perils by water, incessant war, and frequent assassinations, destroyed the colony; and the three great northern chiefs, Macdonald of Sleat, Macleod of Harris, and Mackenzie of Kintail, enjoyed the delight of seeing the principal gentlemen adventurers made captive by Tormod Macleod; who, after extorting from them a renunciation of their titles, and an oath never to return to the Lewis, dismissed them to carry to the Scottish court the melancholy reflection, that a Celtic population, and the islands over which it was scattered, were not yet the materials or the field for the operations of the economists of Fife and Mid-Lothian.[1]

[1] Gregory's History of the Western Highlands and Isles of Scotland, pp. 290-299. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, July 1, 1598.

The king's recent triumph over the ministers, the vigour with which he had brought the bishops into parliament, and compelled his nobles to renounce their blood-feuds, seem to have persuaded him that his will and prerogative were to bear down all before him; but a slight circumstance now occurred which, had he been accustomed to watch such political indications, might have been full of warning and instruction. The magistrates of Edinburgh had arrested an offender: he was rescued by one of the servants of the king. The magistrates prosecuted the rescuer, and compelled him to give assurance that he would deliver the original culprit; but the courtier failed in his promise, and the civic authorities seized him and sent him to prison. An outcry arose. It was deemed disgraceful that an officer of the royal household, a gentleman responsible solely to the king, should be clapt up in jail by a set of burghers and bailies. James interfered, and commanded his servant to be set free; but the bailies refused. The monarch sent a more angry message; it was met by a still firmer reply: the provost and magistrates declared that they were ready to resign their offices into the king's hands; as long, however, as they kept them, they would do their duty. James was much enraged, but cooled and digested the affront.[2]

Within a fortnight after, however, arose a more serious dispute between the crown and the Court of Session, the supreme court of judicature, in which its president, Sir Alexander Seton, and the majority of the judges, exhibited a spirit of independence which is well worthy of being recorded. The subject of quarrel was a judgment pronounced by the court in favour of the celebrated minister of the Kirk, Mr Robert Bruce, who had been deprived of his stipend by the king. Bruce sued the crown before the Session, and obtained a decision in his favour. The monarch appealed, came to the court in person, pleaded his own cause

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, Feb. 27, 1598-9.

with the utmost violence, and commanded the judges to give their vote against Mr Robert. The President Seton then rose: "My liege," said he, "it is my part to speak first in this court, of which your highness has made me head. You are our king; we, your subjects, bound and ready to obey you from the heart, and with all devotion to serve you with our lives and substance; but this is a matter of law, in which we are sworn to do justice according to our conscience and the statutes of the realm. Your majesty may, indeed, command us to the contrary; in which case I, and every honest man on this bench, will either vote according to conscience, or resign and not vote at all." Another of the judges, Lord Newbattle, then rose, and observed, "That it had been spoken in the city, to his majesty's great slander, and theirs who were his judges, that they dared not do justice to all classes, but were compelled to vote as the king commanded: a foul imputation, to which the lie that day should be given; for they would now deliver a unanimous opinion against the crown." For this brave and dignified conduct James was unprepared; and he proceeded to reason long and earnestly with the recusants; but persuasions, arguments, taunts, and threats, were unavailing. The judges, with only two dissentient votes, pronounced their decision in favour of Mr Robert Bruce; and the mortified monarch flung out of court, as a letter of the day informs us, muttering revenge, and raging marvellously.[1] When the subservient temper of these times is considered, and we remember that Seton the president was a Roman Catholic, whilst Bruce, in whose favour he and his brethren decided, was a chief leader of the Presbyterian ministers, it would be unjust to withhold our admiration from a judge and a court which had the courage thus fearlessly to assert the supremacy of the law.

It was during the course of this year that the Queen of England lost Lord Burghley, who died on the 4th of August 1598, in his seventy-eighth year, a long tried and affectionate servant to his royal mistress; but of whom, however high his character as an English statesman, no Scottish historian can speak without censure. He had been, for nearly forty years, the almost exclusive adviser of the English queen in her Scottish affairs. It was chiefly his advice and exertions that brought the unhappy Mary to the scaffold; and in his policy towards Scotland he seems almost invariably to have acted upon the principle, that to foster civil dissension in that kingdom, was to give additional strength and security to England. Happily, the time has come when we may pronounce this maxim as unsound, as it is dishonest; but in those days, craft was mistaken for political wisdom: and Sir Robert Cecil, Lord Burghley's second son, who now succeeded to his father's power, had been educated in the same narrow school.

This able man, who filled the office of secretary of state to Elizabeth, had, as we have seen, for some years taken the chief management of Scottish affairs; and, soon after his father's death, he became deeply alarmed for the orthodoxy of James and his queen; suspecting them, as appears by a paper in his own hand, of growing every day more devoted in their affection to the pope.[2] That these were ideal terrors of the English secretary, the result plainly shewed; but the true key to this apparent papal predilection was James's extreme poverty, the rigid economy of Elizabeth, who refused to supply his wants, and a hope entertained by the Scottish king, that if he exhibited a disposition to relax in the rigidity of his Protestant principles, and to maintain an amicable intercourse with the Catholics, his exhausted exchequer might be recruited by a supply of Roman and Spanish gold. But Cecil, although he allowed some weight to this, thought it too slight a cause to account for the strong symp-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, 16th March, 1598-9.

[2] MS., State-paper Office, Memorial of the present state of Scotland, 1598. Ibid., Nicolson to Cecil, April 14, 1599.

toms of declension from the reformed opinions exhibited both by the king and his councillors, and advised his royal mistress instantly to dispatch Sir William Bowes into Scotland, whose veteran experience in Scottish politics might, he hoped, bring about a reaction. Want of money might, as Cecil contended, explain somewhat of James's late coldness; but there must be deeper agencies and convictions producing the strange appearances now exhibited by a country which had, within these few years, stood in the van of Protestant kingdoms; which had been the stronghold of Presbyterian purity. It was noted, too, by Cecil, that Elphinstone, James's principal secretary of state, was a Catholic; that Seton, the president of the Session, was a Catholic; that Lord Livingstone, the governor of the young princesses, was a Catholic; and that Huntly, who, notwithstanding his recent recantation, was strongly suspected of a secret attachment to his ancient faith, possessed the highest influence over the king.[1] Then, James's late embassies to Catholic princes; the favour shewn to Gordon the Jesuit; his secret encouragement of Tyrone, the great enemy of England; a late mission of Colonel Semple to Spain; his animosity to the ministers of the Kirk; his introduction of bishops; his correspondence with the Duchess of Feria, and other Catholics; and even his speeches in the open convention of his three estates, were all quoted, and not without good reason, as strong proofs of his defection.

The necessities to which the king had reduced himself by his too lavish gifts to his favourites, and the thoughtless extravagance of his household, were indeed deplorable, and produced repeated remonstrances from his treasurer, comptroller, and other financial officers. Money, they said, in a homely and passionate memorial, was required for the "entertainment of the king's bairns, gotten and to be begotten;" for the renewing of his majesty's whole moveables and silver work, all worn and consumed; for the repair and fortification of his castles of Edinburgh, Dumbarton, and Blackness; for the keeping up of his palaces, of which Holyrood and Linlithgow were in shameful decay, and in some parts wholly ruinous. Money was required in all departments of the service of the state, and in all districts, without the kingdom and within it, in the south and in the north. There were no funds to pay the resident in England; no funds to procure secret intelligence; none to support the public officers at home; none to furnish the wardens of the west marches; none to fit out a lieutenant for the expedition against the Western Isles, where the rebels had taken Dunyveg, and were in great strength.[2] It was in vain for James to look to England. Elizabeth replied by sending him a list of her gratuities, which proved that, from 1592 to 1599, she had given him twenty-six thousand pounds.[3] At court, the want of money produced strange scenes; and the high offices of state, instead of being sought after as objects of ambition, were shunned as thankless and ruinous to their possessors. The great office of lord high-treasurer was going a-begging. Blantyre declared he could hold it no longer. Cassillis, a young nobleman who had recently married the rich widow of the Chancellor Maitland, a lady who might have been his mother, was prevailed on to accept it; and had taken the oaths, when the gossip of the court brought to his ears an ominous speech of the king, who had been heard to say, that Lady Cassillis's purse should now be opened for her rose nobles. This alarmed the incipient treasurer into a prompt resignation; but James stormed, ordered his arrest, seized his and his wife's houses, and compelled him to purchase his pardon by a heavy fine.[4] In the end the dangerous gift was accepted

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Memorial of the present state of Scotland.

[2] MS., State-paper Office, the King's extraordinary Charges.

[3] Ibid. Her Majesty's Gratuities to the King of Scots.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, April 10, 1599. Ibid., same to same, April 14, 1599. Ibid., same to same, June 9, 1599. Spottiswood, p. 454.

by the Master of Elphinstone, brother of the secretary of state, "a wise, stout man," as Nicolson characterises him. Yet all his wisdom and firmness were unequal to the task of recruiting the public purse; and so utterly impoverished did he find it, that the expenses of the baptism of the young Princess Margaret, which took place at this time, were defrayed out of the private pockets of the lords of the bed-chamber.[1]

On Sir William Bowes's arrival in Edinburgh, early in May 1599, he found the ministers of the Kirk in high wrath against the king, and full of the most gloomy views as to the state of the country. James had been recently employing his leisure hours in writing his celebrated Treatise on Government, the *Basilicon Doron*, which he had addressed to his son the Prince of Wales; and having employed Sir James Sempil, one of his gentlemen, to make a transcript, the work was imprudently shewn by him to Andrew Melvil; who took offence at some passages, made copies of them, and laying them, without mentioning any names, before the presbytery of St Andrews, accused the anonymous author of having bitterly defamed the Kirk. What the exact passages were which Melvil had transcribed does not appear; but it is certain that the book contained an attack upon the Presbyterian form of church government, and that the prince was instructed to hold none for his friends but such as had been faithful to the late Queen of Scots. It was very clear, (so the ministers argued,) that no person entertaining such sentiments as were openly expressed in this work, could endure for any long time the wholesome discipline of the Kirk; and that the severe and sweeping censure pronounced upon the Scottish Reformation, as the offspring of popular tumult and rebellion, very plainly indicated the author's leaning to Prelacy and Popery. What was to be expected, said they, from a writer who described the leaders of that glorious work as "fiery and seditious spirits, who delighted to rule as *Tribuni plebis*;" and having found the gust of government sweet, had brought about the wreck of two queens; and during a long minority had invariably placed themselves at the head of every faction which weakened and distracted the country? What was to be hoped for if those men, who had been ever the champions of the truth, were to be held up to scorn and avoidance in terms like the following: "Take heed, therefore, my son, to such Puritans, very pests in the church and commonweal, whom no deserts can oblige, neither oaths nor promises bind; breathing nothing but sedition and calumnies, aspiring without measure, railing without reason; and making their own imaginations (without any warrant of the Word) the square of their conscience. I protest before the great God,—and since I am here as upon my testament, it is no place for me to lie in,—that ye shall never find with any Highland or border thieves greater ingratitude, and more lies, and vile perjuries, than with these fanatic spirits."

When the royal commissioners, Sir Patrick Murray and Sir James Sandilands, attempted to discover the means by which these obnoxious sentences had been presented to the synod of St Andrews, they were utterly foiled in the attempt; but the offence was at last traced to an obscure minister at Anstruther, named Dykes; who fled, and was denounced rebel. The rumour had now flown through the country that James was the author of the passages, and had given instructions to the prince, which shewed an inveterate enmity to the Kirk; and it was thought that the publication of the whole work would be the likeliest means to silence the clamour. The book accordingly made its appearance; and in Archbishop Spottiswood's opinion,[1] did more for James's title, by the admiration it raised in England for the piety and wisdom of the royal author, than all the Discourses on the Succession which were published at this time. In

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, April 20, 1599. Ibid., same to same, April 10, 1599.

[1] Spottiswood, p. 456.

Scotland the effect, if we believe Sir William Bowes, was the very opposite. It was received by the ministers with a paroxysm of indignation; and soon after the arrival of the English ambassador, the whole Kirk agreed to proclaim a general Fast, to avert, by prayer and humiliation, the judgments so likely to fall on an apostate king and a miserable country. For two entire days the Fast was rigidly observed; and Bowes declared, in his letter to Cecil, that in all his life he had never been witness to a more holy or powerful practice of religion.[1] From the pulpit the ministers proclaimed to the people the chief causes for their call to mourning. A general coldness in God's service had seized, they said, on all ranks. The enemies of the Gospel, who in purer days had been driven into banishment, were now everywhere returning; and almost a third of the realm was deprived of every means for the teaching of the people. The king himself had become the defamer of the Kirk; his children were brought up by an excommunicated Papist; and the young nobility, the hopes of the country, went abroad meanly instructed, and returned either Atheists or Catholics.[2]

A singular event occurred at this time, which led to the recall of Bowes, the English ambassador, and gave high umbrage to the Scottish king. An English gentleman, named Ashfield,[3] had lately come from Berwick on a visit to the Scottish court, who, as there is strong reason to believe, was one of those confidential agents whom James had employed in England to give him secret advice and information on the subject of his succession to the English throne, after the death of the queen. Lord Wylloughby, the governor of Berwick, had himself recommended Ashfield to James's notice; but he had scarcely taken his leave, when Wylloughby discovered that he was a suspicious character, and might do much mischief in Scotland. His alarm became still greater, when he found the attention shewn to Ashfield by James; his intimacy with the Catholic party at court, then in great favour with the king; and the strong suspicion of Bowes the ambassador, that some treachery against England was contemplated. It was determined to destroy it in the bud, by kipnapping the principal party; and John Guevara, deputy-warden of the east marches, Wylloughby's cousin, undertook the commission. Repairing, with only three assistants, to Edinburgh, it was concerted with Bowes, that the ambassador's coach should be waiting on Leith sands, and that Ashfield, under pretence of taking a pleasure drive, should be inveigled into it, and carried off. All succeeded to a wish. Ashfield, as he took his exercise on the sands with some gentlemen, amongst whom were young Fernyhirst, Sir Robert Melvil, and Bowes, was met by Guevara and his companions, and easily persuaded, "under colour of old friendship and good fellowship,"[4] to join in a wine party; at which, becoming somewhat merry and confused, he readily fell into the trap, entered the coach, and instead of being driven back to Edinburgh, found himself, to his utter confusion, conveyed rapidly to Berwick, and placed under sudden restraint by Lord Wylloughby. Next morning, Wainman, another of the governor's servants, arrived with Ashfield's papers, which he and Bowes had seized, and brought intelligence that the Scottish king was in the greatest rage at the indignity offered him; and that the people had surrounded Sir William Bowes's lodging, and threatened his life. It had been discovered that the gentlemen who kidnapped Ashfield were in Wylloughby's service, that the coach belonged to the English ambassador, and that some intoxicating potion had been put in his wine. James wrote a severe and dignified remonstrance to Wylloughby, in which he demanded to know whether this outrage had been

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Cecil, June 25, 1599.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Afterwards Sir Edmund Ashfield.
[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Lord Wylloughby to Cecil, June 15, 1599. See also, B.C., Wylloughby to Cecil, June 13, 1599.

committed under any warrant or order from the English queen;[1] assuring him that it was a matter which, without speedy reparation, he would not pass over. To this Wylloughby boldly replied, that what had been done was not in consequence of any warrant from the queen, but in the discharge of his own public duty;[2] whilst Sir William Bowes, who had concerted the whole, when challenged on the subject, made no scruple of asserting, that he had not only no hand in the business, but was utterly ignorant of all about it.[3] So true was Sir Henry Wotton's well-known pun on the character of ambassadors of these days. James's dissatisfaction, however, was so great, and the coldness and distance with which he treated Bowes made his place so irksome, that Elizabeth soon afterwards recalled him.[4]

The arrival of a French ambassador at this crisis increased the dissatisfaction of the English queen and the ministers of the Kirk; who suspected that his mission, although kept secret, was connected with James's intrigues with the Catholics abroad. He was a gentleman of the house of Bethune, a younger brother of the great Sully, and much caressed at the Scottish court: but what especially alarmed the Kirk was his having brought a Jesuit along with him, who was frequently closeted with the king; whilst the openness with which Sully was allowed the exercise of his religion, caused the brethren to sigh over the contrast of the present cold and liberal times with the happy days when it was death to set up the Mass in Scotland. Scarcely had these feelings subsided, and the ministers begun to congratulate themselves on the prospect of the speedy departure of Bethune, when their wrath was rekindled by the arrival of Fletcher and Martin, with their company of comedians; whom James, who delighted in the theatre, had sent for from England. To the strict notions of these divines, profane plays, and the licentious mummeries of the stage, were almost as detestable as the Mass itself. The one was idolatry—the worship of Baal, or the golden calf; the other was profanity—the dancing of Herodias' daughter: and as this had led to Herod's rash oath, and the decapitation of the Baptist, so did these English buffoons recall to their mind the miserable times of the Guisean domination, when the court was full of revelry and masquerade, and the blood of the saints was shed like water. It was no wonder that, with such feelings, the arrival of this gay troop of players was received with a storm of ecclesiastical wrath, for which the gentlemen of the buskin were little prepared; and their case appeared desperate, when the magistrates of the capital, acting under the influence of the Kirk, prohibited the inhabitants, by a public act, from haunting the theatre. But James was not so easily defeated. Fletcher had been an old favourite; nor was this his first visit to Scotland. He had been there before, in 1594; and, on his return to England, had suffered some persecution from his popularity with James; who now called the provost and his councillors before him, compelled them to rescind their act, and proclaimed, by sound of trumpet, not only that the comedians should continue their entertainments, but insisted that, next Sunday, the ministers should inform their flocks that no restraint or censure should be incurred by any of his good subjects who chose to recreate themselves by "the said comedies and

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., James VI. to Lord Wylloughby, June 14, 1599.

[2] Ibid. Lord Wylloughby to James, original draft, June 15, 1599.

[3] Ibid. Wylloughby to Cecil, June 15, 1599. Also, ibid, Bowes to Cecil, June 16, 1599.—Bowes's activity and connivance is completely proved by Lord Wylloughby's letter of the 15th June, to Cecil. He there says:—"I sent some to Edinburgh, with instructions for his reducing. They made divers overtures to my lord ambassador, [this was Bowes.] It pleased him to accept of one, which was to draw him to Leith; there under colour of a dissolute kindness and good fellowship, to make him merry with wine; then to persuade him to ride home in a coach, sent out of purpose therein to surprise him, and bring him away; which, as it pleased God, had very good success." The coach was Bowes's.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Bowes to Cecil, July 9, 1 99.

plays." "Considering," so runs the royal act, "that we are not of purpose, nor intention, to authorize or command any thing quhilk[1] is profane, or may carry any offence." [2]

The king's mind had long run intently on the subject of the succession; and he now adopted a measure which, so far as Elizabeth was concerned, was calculated rather to injure than advance his title. A general band or contract was drawn up, "purporting to be made by the good subjects of the king's majesty, for the preservation of his person and the pursuit of his undoubted right to the crown of England and Ireland." [3] The whole matter, during its preparation, was kept secret, and James trusted that no whisper would reach the ears of his good sister Elizabeth. But he was disappointed; for Nicolson, on the 27th November 1599, thus mentioned it to Cecil: "I hear, which I beseech your honour to keep close, that there is a general band, subscribed by many, and to be subscribed by all earls, lords, and barons: binding them, by solemn vow and oath, to serve the king with their lives, friends, heritages, goods, and gear; and to be ready in warlike furniture, for the same on all occasions, but especially for his claim to England." [4] The English envoy then mentioned, that on the 10th of the succeeding month of December, there was to be held a full convention of the estates, in which some solid course was to be adopted to supply the king with money, and provide for the arming of his subjects, to be ready when he might need them. But when the estates assembled, the result did not justify expectations. The convention, indeed, was fully attended, and sufficiently loyal in its general feeling; yet when the monarch explained his wants, and sought their advice and assistance, they heard him coldly, and delayed their answer till the next meeting of the estates. In his harangue, James declared his dislike to any offensive scheme of taxation; proposing, in its place, that a certain sum should be levied on every head of cattle and sheep throughout the country; but this was utterly refused. He forbore, therefore, to press the point, and contented himself with an appeal to them for that support which all good subjects should give their prince for the vindication of his lawful claims. He was not certain, he said, how soon he should have occasion to use arms; but whenever it should be, he knew his right, and would venture crown and all for it. Let them take care, therefore, that the country be furnished with armour according to the acts made two years before.[5] This was cheerfully agreed to; and meanwhile the king, whose financial ingenuity seems to have been whetted by the gloomy prospect of an empty exchequer at the time money was becoming every day more needed, drew up another scheme which was submitted to his estates with as little success as the former. Its object was excellent, being to remove the burden of supplies from the poor commons and labourers of the ground; for which purpose he proposed, that the whole country should be "disposed, as it were, into one thousand persons, and each person to pay a particular sum;" which, all being joined, would make up a total equal to his majesty's necessities.

Against this plan, which had, at least, the merit of simplicity, a formal protest was presented by the barons and burghs. The Laird of Wemyss in the name of the barons, and John Robertson for the burghs, insisted that they should be especially excepted from any commission given to the sheriffs, for the levying such a sum, and should continue to "stint [tax] themselves in auld manner;" but as the proposal was hypothetical, and came before the estates merely as an overture, it was judged enough to meet it by delay; and so anxious was the king to spare his people, and fall

[1] Quhilk; which.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nov. 12, 1599, Nicolson to Cecil.

[3] MS., State paper Office, A general Band, voluntarily made by the good subjects of the king's majesty, &c.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nov. 27, 1599, Nicolson to Cecil.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, December 15, 1599, Nicolson to Cecil.

in with the wishes of all, that he not only agreed to except the barons and burghs, but to drop the whole scheme if any better should be proposed at the next convention, which was fixed to be held at Edinburgh on the 20th of June.[1] It was happy that all ended so amicably; for at the beginning of the convention he had exerted himself to carry his purpose by means which were violent and unconstitutional. "To effect this," said Nicolson, in writing to Cecil, "the king drew in the whole borders, the officers of estate, Sir Robert Kerr, Sir Robert Melvil, and others, contrary to the order there appointed, of six only of every estate to have voted for the rest."

It was during this convention, held at Edinburgh in December, that the king, with advice of his secret council, passed an important act, appointing, in all time coming, the "first day of the year to begin upon the 1st of January;" and this statute, it was added, should take effect upon the 1st day of January next to come, which shall be the 1st day of January 1600.[3] Previous to this time the Scottish year had begun on the 25th of March; and it is worthy of observation, that this still continued the mode of reckoning in England.[4]

CHAPTER XI.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1600.

IN the course of these labours we are now arrived at an extraordinary plot, of which the history, after all the light shed upon it by recent research, is still, in some points, obscure and contradictory. This is the Gowrie conspiracy. Its author, or, as some have not scrupled to assert, its victim, was the grandson of that Patrick lord Ruthven, who, as we have seen, acted a chief part in the atrocious murder of Riccio, and died in exile soon after that event.[2] It was the second son of this nobleman, William, fourth Lord Ruthven, who, after sharing the guilt and banishment of his father for his accession to the same plot, was restored by the Regent Morton, and returned to Scotland to engage in new conspiracies. It was his threats, and the menaces of the fierce Lindsay, that were said to have extorted from the miserable captive of Lochleven the demission of her crown. His services were rewarded by an earldom; and from the fertile brain and unscrupulous principles of the new earl proceeded the plot for the seizure of the king, known by the name of the Raid of Ruthven. He was pardoned; became again suspected; threw himself into another enterprise against the government, with Mar and Angus; was detected, found guilty, and suffered on the scaffold. Of his treason there was no doubt; but his conviction, as we have seen,[5] was procured by a disgraceful expedient, which roused the utmost indignation of his friends. This happened in 1584; and, for two years after, the imperious government of Arran directed, or rather compelled, the royal wrath

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Copy of the Act of the Convention at St Johnston.

[2] Supra, vol. iii. p. 220.

[3] MS., State-paper Office, Act for the year of God to begin the 1st of January, yearly.

[4] Sir H. Nicolas's excellent work on the Chronology of History, p. 41.

[5] Supra, vol. iv. p. 75.

into the severest measures against the house of Ruthven. But the destruction of Arran's power permitted the king's temper, generally gentle and forgiving, to have influence; and, in 1586, the earldom was restored to James, the eldest son of the house, who, dying soon after, transmitted it to John, the third earl, the author of the Gowrie conspiracy.

Young Gowrie, at the time of his father's execution, could have been scarcely eight years old;[1] and in the wreck of his house, he, his unhappy mother, and her other children, received an asylum in the north. Here, amidst the savage solitudes of Athole, the country of her son-in-law,[2] the widowed countess brought up her children, brooded over her wrongs, and taught her sons the story of their father's murder, as his execution was accounted by his party. From such lessons they seem early to have drunk in that deep passion for revenge, which, in those dark days, was so universally felt, that it may be regarded almost as the pulse of feudal life; a passion which, sometimes at a quicker, sometimes at a slower pace, but yet with strong and abiding force, carried on its victims to the consummation of their purpose. Meanwhile the royal pity had awoke: the family was restored to its honours; and the young earl, having been committed to the care of Rollock, the learned principal of the university of Edinburgh, received an excellent education. But the return for all this, on the part both of his mother and himself, was ingratitude and new intrigues. When, in 1593, Bothwell at Holyrood audaciously broke in upon his sovereign, and for a short season obtained possession of his person, it was the Countesses of Gowrie and Athole, the mother and sister of Gowrie, who were his most active assistants; and in 1594, when the same desperate baron, in conjunction with Athole, Ochiltree, and the Kirk, organised a second plot, the name of the young Earl of Gowrie appeared in the "*band*" which united the conspirators.[3] He was thus early bred up in intrigue; but the king either did not, or would not, discover his guilt: and Gowrie, having received the royal license to complete his education abroad,[4] passed through England into Italy, studied for five years at the university of Padua, and there is said to have so highly distinguished himself, that he became rector of that famous seminary.[5] The young earl was now only one-and-twenty;[6] of an athletic person and noble presence; excellent in all his exercises; an accomplished swordsman; and so ripe a scholar, that there was scarcely any art or faculty which he had not mastered. Amongst his studies, necromancy, or natural magic, was a favourite pursuit; and his tutor, Rhynd, detected him, when at Padua, wearing cabalistic characters concealed upon his person, which were then sometimes used as spells against diabolic, or recipients of angelic influence.[7] He was an enthusiastic chemist; and, in common with many eminent men of that age, a dabbler in judicial astrology, and a believer in the great arcanum. It is curious that this propensity to magic and visionary pursuits was hereditary in the Ruthven family. His grandfather, the murderer of Riccio, had given Queen Mary a magic ring, as a preservative against poison. His father, the leader in the Raid of Ruthven, when in Italy, had his fortunes foretold by a wizard; and the son, when some of his friends had killed an adder in the braes of Strathbran, lamented their haste, and told them he would have diverted them by making

[1] MS., State-paper Office, List of the Scottish Nobility, 1592. In 1592 Gowrie was fifteen years old.

[2] The Earl of Athole had married the sister of Gowrie, MS., State-paper Office.

[3] *Supra*, p. 196, and MS., State-paper Office, Scott. Corr. April 1594, Band for Protection of Religion.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir R. Bowes to Burghley, August 22, 1594.

[5] Calderwood, MS. History, British Museum, Ayscough, 4739, p. 1386, states this positively: but I have not found his authority.

[6] MS., State-paper Office, drawn up for Cecil in 1592, State of the Scottish nobility.

[7] Rhynd's Declaration in Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. pp. 219, 220.

it dance to the tune of some cabalistic words which he had learnt in Italy from a great necromancer and divine.

During his residence at Padua, Gowrie addressed to the king a letter full of gratitude and affection.[1] He kept up, also, a correspondence with his old tutor Rollock; and, in 1595, sent a long epistle to Malcolm, the minister of the kirk at Perth, expressing the most devoted attachment to Presbyterian principles, and written in that strange, pedantic, puritanic style which then characterised the correspondence of the most zealous of that party.[2] The young earl described in this letter, with high exultation and approval, an insane attack made by a fanatical English Protestant upon a Catholic procession, in which he seized the sacred Host, and trampled it under foot; and concluded by expressions of deep regret that his absence from Scotland did not permit him to set forth God's glory in his native country; trusting, as he added, to make up for all this on his return.

This return took place in 1599, through Switzerland; and on arriving at Geneva, he became an inmate for three months in the house of the famous reformer Beza, who cherished him as the son of a father whom his party regarded as a martyr to the Protestant faith. From Geneva he travelled to Paris, where he was received with high distinction at the French court, and by Elizabeth's ambassador, Sir Henry Nevil; who admitted him into his confidence, held private conferences with him "on the alterations feared in Scotland," to use Nevil's own words, "found him to be exceedingly well affected to the cause of religion, devoted to Elizabeth's service, and, in short, a nobleman of whom, for his good judgment, zeal, and ability, exceeding good use might be made on his return."[3] Bothwell, his old friend and associate, was also at this time in Paris. On leaving France, Gowrie, carrying warm letters of recommendation from Nevil, proceeded to the English court, where Elizabeth received him with flattering distinction, and kept him for two months, admitting him to her confidence, holding with him great conference[4] on the state of Scotland, which was then threatening and alarming; and it is said by one author, appointing a guard to watch over his safety. It was then no unfrequent occurrence for the incipient intriguer, or conspirator, to be seized or kidnapped by the stratagem of his opponents; and, if true, this circumstance certainly shews how highly the English queen regarded his safety, and what value she set upon his future services. During this stay in England he became familiar with Sir Robert Cecil, at this moment the most confidential minister of Elizabeth; with the great Lord Wylloughby, one of the honestest and ablest servants of the queen;[5] and with many others of the leading men about court.

At the time of Gowrie's arrival in England, (3d April 1600,) Elizabeth was deeply incensed with the proceedings of the Scottish king, and his reported intrigues with the Catholics of her own kingdom, and with the courts of Spain and Rome, on the subject of his title. He had resolved, and made no secret of his resolution, to vindicate his right to the crown of England by arms, if it were necessary; and he had roused the resentment and alarm of the party of the Kirk to the highest pitch, by the court which he paid to the Catholics, both at home and on the continent. A letter written to Cecil by Colvile, about six months before this, described these intrigues and preparations in strong terms.

Colvile, it must be remembered, was the confidant of the notorious Bothwell, and an old friend and fellow-conspirator of Gowrie's father. It was certain, so said Colvile in this letter, that two envoys had come to the

[1] Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol ii. p. 330.

[2] It has been printed by Mr Pitcairn in the second volume of his valuable work, the Criminal Trials, pp. 330, 331.

[3] Sir Henry Nevil to Secretary Cecil, February 27, 1599. Winwood's Memorials, vol. i. p. 156.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir John Carey to Cecil, May 29, 1600.

[5] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, James Hudson to Cecil, April 3, 1600. Also, ibid., B.C. Wylloughby to Cecil, August 11, 1600.

Scottish King from the Pope. They had brought high offers: a promise of a hundred thousand crowns at present, and an engagement to pay down two millions the moment he published liberty of conscience, and declared war with England. Twenty thousand Catholics were said to be ready to join the king the moment he crossed the Border. There was not one Catholic prince in Europe who would not support his claim; and his holiness not only regarded him as the most learned and religious prince of his time, but would willingly follow his advice in restoring to the universal church its purity and discipline.[1] In another letter, written some time before this, and dated 17th August 1599, Colvile speaks to Cecil of the ominous tranquillity of the Scottish court; which, he says, he had often remarked to be never so quiet as when some "snake-stone was hatching;" adding, "*Quand le Mechant dort, le Diable le berche.*" He assured Cecil, that the king was highly enraged and excited against the party of the Kirk. The ministers were led by Bruce and Andrew Melvil; their ranks included Cassillis, Lindsay, Morton, and Blantyre; and he added, with a significancy which this statesman could be at no loss to understand, that if they received any secret encouragement from England, they were devising to send for Gowrie and Argyle, both of whom were then abroad.[2]

This letter was written towards the end of August 1599, when Gowrie was probably on his route to England; and in the interval between this and his arrival at the court of Elizabeth, the estrangement between the Queen of England and the King of Scots had become more embittered. Nicolson, the English envoy at the Scottish court, was full of alarm at James's almost open hostility. In one of his letters to Cecil, written in the end of April 1600, when Gowrie was at the English court, and, as we have just seen, admitted to the confidence of this minister and his royal mistress, he described the king as indulging in expressions of the utmost discontent and anger on the subject of the intended peace between England and Spain. Elizabeth (such were James's words) had long resisted every amicable application made to her on the point of his title; and now he heard one day she was about to marry the Lady Arabella to the brother of the Emperor Mathias; the next, that she had sent for young Beauchamp to court; the next, that in consequence of her peace with Spain, a priest had openly addressed the Infanta, as the destined restorer of the Catholics in England.[3] Of all this, James added, the queen refused him any explanation. She treated him with coldness and suspicion; and it became him to look to his just rights, and provide for the future.

Such things were said even openly by the King of Scots; but in the secrecy of his cabinet, James used far stronger language. He there insisted, that before Elizabeth's death, which, considering her advanced age and broken health, could not be far distant, he must be ready armed, his exchequer well supplied, and the friends on whom he could place reliance assembled on the spot with their full strength. To compass all this, he had spared no exertion. England swarmed with his spies; and the "daily creeping in of Englishmen" to the Scottish Court was a matter which perpetually roused the suspicions of Cecil, and cut his royal mistress to the quick. At this very moment, when Gowrie was in such confidential intercourse with that princess and her ministers, the Scottish king had received information which made him stand especially on his guard. It was reported that a plot was then being organized by the faction in the interest of England, to compel the king into a more pacific policy, and arrest his warlike preparations against that realm;[4] that Colvile, Archibald

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Advertisements from Scotland, August 18, 1599, enclosed in a letter from Colvile, dated August 21, 1599.
[2] Ibid.
[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, Dec. 24, 1599.
[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, April 20, 1600.

Douglas, and Douglas the Laird of Spot, all of them old employés of Cecil, were the chief conspirators in England; and that they were casting about to draw home the Earl of Gowrie, then at the court of Elizabeth, and on whom they reckoned as a great accession to to their strength.[1] Bothwell, too, the arch-traitor, whom of all men the king hated and dreaded most, had been at Paris at the same time with Gowrie: their former intimacy rendered it almost impossible they should not have met; and it was now strongly reported that this desperate man had stolen into Scotland, and had been thrice seen recently in Liddesdale.[2]

Such was the state of parties; such the mutual heart-burning, jealousy, intrigues, and preparations between the two sovereigns, when Gowrie, after two months' residence in England, left the court of Elizabeth and returned to his native country. The facts hitherto given are all capable of proof: their effects upon the character of Gowrie, and how far they influenced or serve to explain his subsequent extraordinary proceedings, can only be conjectural. Yet it appears that they go far to explain something of the mystery which hitherto has surrounded the origin of this plot; and that here we have one of those cases where, from the elements on which we form our opinion, conjecture may come indefinitely near to certainty. Gowrie was young: and on youth what must have been worked by the flattery of a queen, and so great a queen as Elizabeth? He was ambitious and proud; and when he found that his friends were anxious to place him at the head of the English faction, and in opposition to the hostile projects of the king, was it likely he should decline that pre-eminence? He was a devoted and enthusiastic Puritan, and hated Prelacy. Was such a mind likely to refuse the opportunity that now offered, to re-establish the Presbyterian ascendancy, to reinstate his old friends, the ministers, on the ground from which they had been driven; and to destroy, if possible, that Catholic faith, which, in his judgment, was idolatrous and damnable? He was animated by a keen desire to revenge his father's death on the monarch who had brought him to the scaffold; and was it probable that when, in the secret conferences which took place with Nevil, Cecil, and Elizabeth, the hostile plans and dangerous intrigues of the King of Scotland were discussed, the Raid of Ruthven should have been forgotten; or that the nefarious project, so repeatedly hazarded, so often crowned with success, to seize the king's person, and administer the government under his pretended sanction, would not present itself? To grasp the supreme power, and have his revenge into the bargain: were such offers unlikely to be held out by so unscrupulous a minister as Cecil? Was it probable that, if held out, they would be refused by Gowrie? But leaving such speculations, let us proceed.

The young earl arrived in Scotland, after his long absence, about the 20th of May; and some little circumstances accompanied his return, which, after his miserable fate, were remembered and much dwelt on. He entered the capital surrounded by an unusually brilliant cavalcade of noblemen and gentlemen, the friends and dependents of his house, and amid the shouts of immense crowds who welcomed his return. On hearing of it, the king shook his head, and observed, that as many shouted when his father lost his head at Stirling. Whether this was said in the presence of the young earl is not not added by Calderwood, who gives the anecdote; but it was noticed, and we may be pretty sure would reach his ear. When he kissed hands, and took his place in the court circle, his fine presence, handsome countenance, and graceful manners, struck every one. He soon became a special favourite of the queen and her ladies, one of whom was his sister, Lady Beatrix Ruthven; and to the king, his learning and scholarship made him equally acceptable. He had lived in the society of the most eminent foreign scholars, philosophers,

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, April 20, 1600.

[2] Ibid., B.C. Guevara to Lord Willoughby, April 23, 1600.

and divines; but he was equally accomplished in all knightly sports, and could discuss the merits of a hawk or hound as enthusiastically as any subject in the circle of the sciences. This was much to James's content; and as the monarch sat at breakfast, he would often keep Gowrie leaning on the back of his chair, and talk to him with that voluble, undignified familiarity which marked the royal conversation. He rallied the young nobleman, also, on his long stay at the English court; and, as Sir John Carey wrote to Cecil, assailed him with many "fleytes[1] and pretty taunts," on the high honours paid him by Elizabeth, his frequent great conferences with the queen, her offer to bribe him with gold, and the sumptuousness of his reception and entertainment. He marvelled, too, with good-humoured irony, that his old friends, the ministers of the Kirk, had not ridden out to meet him and form part of his triumphant cavalcade;[2] and, half between joke and earnest, contrived to show him that he had watched all his movements, and was perfectly aware of his confidential intercourse with Nevil, Cecil, and Elizabeth herself.

All this Gowrie took, or seemed to take, in good part.[3] He had certainly, he said, been honourably entertained, and very graciously received by the queen of England; but this, he believed, was for the king his master's sake, and so he had accepted it. As for gold, he had been offered none; nor did he need it; he had enough of his own.[4] It was in one of those familiar conversations on a strange subject, that an allusion escaped the king, which was afterwards remembered. Queen Anne was at this time great with child, and probably did not take sufficient care of herself; but be this as it may, James consulted Gowrie, who had studied at Padua, then the highest medical school in Europe, on the most common causes of miscarriage. He mentioned several, but insisted on fright or sudden terror as the most dangerous; upon which the king, bursting into a fit of loud and scornful laughter, exclaimed, "Had that been true, my lord, I should never have been sitting here to ask the question. Remember the slaughter of Seignor Davie, wherein thy grandsire was the chief actor:" a reckless, cruel thrust, which the young nobleman must have felt like an adder's sting: for not only his grandfather but his father were present at that bloody deed.[5]

On another occasion, soon after his arrival, a ruffle was nearly taking place in the long gallery at Holyrood, between the servants of Colonel William Stewart and some of the gentlemen of Gowrie's suite. It was this Stewart who had seized his father at Dundee, and dragged him to his trial and death; and all dreaded a bloody encounter. But Gowrie, to their surprise, beat down the weapons of his followers; and giving place with a contemptuous gesture to Stewart, permitted him to walk first into the presence-chamber. On being remonstrated with, his brief and proud reply was a Latin proverb, "*Aquila non captat muscas.*" It is the remark of an old chronicler, that he here covertly alluded to his intended revenge against the king.[6] It is certain, at least, that it betrayed a determination on Gowrie's part to fly at the highest quarry.

On his first arrival at court, about the middle of May 1600, he found the king's mind still concentrated upon that one subject which had so long filled his thoughts, and which he had determined to bring shortly before a convention of his nobility, barons, and burghs. This was the necessity of making preparation for an event now currently talked of—the death of Elizabeth. To this end James had

1 Fleytes; scolds.
2 MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Sir John Carey to Sir R. Cecil, May 29, 1600.
3 Ibid., Nicolson to Cecil, May 2, 1600.
4 Ibid., B.C., Sir John Carey to Sir R. Cecil, May 29, 1600.
5 Calderwood, MS. History, British Museum, Sloan, 4739, fol. 1389.
6 Anonymous MS. History of Scotland, quoted in Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 297.

summoned a convention of the three estates to meet on the 20th of June. He had resolved to levy a tax upon the country, to pay his ambassadors to foreign parts; and to have such a force in readiness as should overawe his enemies, and give confidence to his supporters. On these proposed measures parties were so divided, and such violent storms were apprehended, that the wisest, as Nicolson wrote to Cecil, wished themselves out of the country; and Gowrie, by the advice of his friends, after a brief stay at court, retired to his own estates, "to be a beholder of the issue of these many suspicions."[1] Soon after this, a violent interview took place between the king and the English resident, Nicolson, in which James complained that Elizabeth had treated him with the utmost haughtiness and want of confidence on the subject of the Spanish peace. She blamed him, he said, for matters of which he was wholly innocent, and shewed more kindness to a foreign duke and the Infanta than to him. It was openly bragged by one of her subjects, that Bothwell was to be let loose, to come in again and brave it. She had seized a parcel of muskets, which he had declared upon his honour had been purchased for the use of his household, as if she dreaded they should be turned against herself.[2] All this, which was daily reported to Elizabeth and Cecil, increased the unfriendly feelings between the two courts, and convinced the English minister that something decided must be done, to check that bold, and almost hostile attitude, in which James seemed now determined to insist upon his rights to the English throne.

At last the important day of the convention of the three estates arrived. The nobility, including Gowrie amongst the rest, assembled; the barons and burghs attended; and the king, after having in many private interviews endeavoured to gain over the leading men to his own views, brought his proposals before the public meeting of the three estates, in a studied harangue. To his extreme indignation and astonishment, he failed to convince them of the necessity of taxing themselves to raise the sum he required. The majority of the nobility and the prelates, who had been privately canvassed by James, and talked over by the Earl of Mar, were compliant enough; but the barons and the burghs stoutly resisted. The king adjourned the convention from Monday till Tuesday, employing the interval in threats, entreaties, and remonstrances; but on this day they were as stubborn as before. Another and longer adjournment, and another meeting took place. It not only found them in the same indomitable humour, but some of the higher barons began to waver. The Lord President Seton, in reply to the assertion of the royal claimant, that he must have an army ready on the queen's death, to maintain his title, argued against the utter folly of attempting to seize that ancient crown by conquest. For such a purpose, he observed, who could say what exact sum might be required? and if the sum were named, who was so insane as to expect that Scotland could raise it? If about to build a palace, they might have a plan and an estimate; if to raise an army of so many thousand men, some certainty might be had of the funds required; but who would venture to fix the sum necessary for the conquest of England? and if fixed, who could be so mad as to believe that the poor country of Scotland could raise it, when it was notorious that sundry towns in England and the Low Countries could advance more money than all Scotland together?[3] Mr Edward Bruce argued for the king's views; and insisted that every true Scotsman, if he regarded the honour of his prince and country, ought to contribute to the sum now required. Let them not imagine, said he, that a refusal would be unaccompanied with danger. Who-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, May 27, 1600.
[2] Ibid., May 29, 1600.
[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, June 22, 1600. Ibid., same to same, June 29, 1600.

ever usurped England after Elizabeth's death would have an eye to Scotland; and if they now suffered their king to be defeated of his right, they might chance to find themselves defeated of their country.

This argument somewhat softened James, who had started up in a violent passion and accused the President Seton of perverting his meaning. But nothing could move the barons and burghs. They reiterated their plea of poverty; declared, that when the time came, they would furnish their monarch as fair an army as ever good subjects levied for their prince; and in the meanwhile, instead of forty thousand crowns, would give him forty thousand pounds Scots, on the condition that they should never again be taxed in his time; and that what they did give should go to his own wants, and not to his hungry courtiers. The king spurned at this diminished and conditional offer, and insisted that it should be put to the vote whether it had not been agreed in a former convention at St Johnston, that a hundred thousand crowns should be advanced him by a thousand persons.

On this new question the young Earl of Gowrie now spoke for the first time; and heading the opposition of the barons and the burghs, exposed the king to the disgrace of a second defeat.[1] He had, he said, been long absent from the country, and had no personal knowledge of what had taken place at St Johnston; but he contended that the present offer of the burghs and barons, to give forty thousand pounds to the king, and their promise to raise money for an army when it was required, was quite as good, nay, almost a better proposal, than that so strongly insisted on by James. Why, then, should his majesty take such deep umbrage at it? Surely, he continued, it must be evident, that this demand of the king will bring dishonour upon all parties: it is dishonourable for a prince to ask more than his subjects have to give, and suffer the ignominy of a refusal; it is dishonourable for a people that their poverty should be laid bare to the world, and that all men should see and know they could give so little to their prince.[2]

This speech of Gowrie, and the daring way in which so young a man threw himself into the ranks of the faction opposed to the king, astonished the assembly. "Alas!" said Sir David Murray, a courtier, who stood near, "yonder is an unhappy man: his enemies are but seeking an occasion for his death; and now he has given it."[3] But if others wondered, the king, to use an expression of Nicolson's to Cecil, absolutely *raged*, and dismissed the assembly with a tumultuous burst of fierce and undignified invective; mingling his abuse of the barons and burghs with praises of his nobility, whom he assured of his friendship and favour in all their affairs. "As for you, my masters," he exclaimed, turning with flashing eyes to the burghers, "your matters, too, may chance to come in my way; and, be assured, I shall remember this day, and be even with you. It was I who gave you a vote in parliament; I who made you a fourth estate; and it will be well for such as you to remember, that I can summon a parliament at my pleasure, and pull you down as easily as I have built you up." This insulting speech roused one of the oldest of the barons, the Laird of Easter Wemyss, who boldly told the king that he misconstrued their meaning, and forgot how much he owed them, and what great sums they had given him in his necessities. "We have done your majesty," said he, "as good offices for *our* estate; and we, your majesty's burghs and barons, are as worthy your thanks as the proudest earl, or lord, or prelate here. Our callings may be inferior, but our devotedness is as great; and so your majesty will find it when the proper time arrives. As for our places in parliament and convention,

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, June 29, 1600.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, June 29, 1600.

[3] MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4739, fol. 1389.

we have bought our seats, we have paid your majesty for them, and we cannot with justice be deprived of them. But the throne is surrounded by flatterers, who propagate falsehoods against us: let us be confronted with our accusers, and we engage to prove them liars."[1]

With this haughty defence on the part of the lesser barons and burghs, and with the deepest feelings of displeasure against them and Gowrie on the part of the king, the convention separated; and James had to digest, not only the disgrace of a refusal, but the universal satisfaction which, if we may believe Nicolson, it occasioned in the country. He was not diverted from his purpose, however; for, not ten days after, Sir Robert Cecil, who was familiar with all that had taken place at the convention, was informed by one of his correspondents, that James's preparations against England continued, and that he intended not to tarry till Elizabeth's death. This news was written partly in cipher, on a slip of paper sent to Cecil, endorsed with the caution, "*To read and burn.*" It contained this passage:—"Nicolson tells me he understands, by one who never abused him, that the king is, by all means, seeking a party, and hath a party in England; and by party or faction, if he can have commodity by either, ... intends not to tarry upon her majesty's death, but take time so soon as without peril he can."[2]

It is probably from this moment that we may date the actual rise of the Gowrie conspiracy. Elizabeth and James were, as we have just seen, on the very worst terms with each other. Gowrie, by every feeling of education, interest, and revenge, was attached to England and its queen; and his conduct in the convention had now thrown him into mortal opposition with the King of Scots. James was intriguing with the queen's subjects in England. It was suspected he had fomented the rebellion in Ireland; and all this at a moment when the queen was most likely to resent it deeply; for she had lately been roused and irritated by the insane projects of Essex. Although aged, Elizabeth was still unbroken in health; yet James must be watching for her death, and openly admonishing his subjects to make preparations for taking possession of her crown. This Gowrie knew; and he reckoned on the support of England in anything he undertook against the king. He could build, too, with certainty on the favourable opinion of the lesser barons, and the influential body of the burghs. They had already made their stand against the king; in the convention Gowrie had joined them; and they understood each other. On the Kirk he could rely with still more certainty: he was the darling hope of the Presbyterian party, the son of their martyr: the youthful Daniel, who had kept his first faith entire in the bosom of idolatry, and in the very head-quarters of Antichrist. Could he doubt that, in any attempt to stay the headlong haste with which their unhappy king seemed to be throwing himself into the arms of the Catholic party, he would fail to have the whole force of the Kirk upon his side? All this was encouraging; and when, in addition to these inducements, he contemplated the rich reward awaiting his success if he made himself master of the king's person—the gratification of his ambition, power, place, fame; above all, revenge—was it likely that a man of Gowrie's temperament would resist them all? Besides, he had enemies: his death and ruin, if we may believe one who must have had good cause of knowledge, were already resolved on;[3] and if he did not become the assailant, it was a narrow chance but he might prove the victim. If, on the other hand, he could but strike the blow, his popularity and high connexions promised him many friends, on whose concurrence he could safely reckon.

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, June 29, 1600.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, July 9, 1600. Secret information sent in the letter, endorsed, *To read and burn.*

[3] *Supra*, p. 283.

But how was the blow to be struck? Here was the whole difficulty and danger; and here, young as he was, Gowrie appears to have devised a plot unlike any hitherto known in his country's history, although fertile in conspiracies: more Italian than Scottish; crafty, rather than openly courageous; and, from its very originality, not, perhaps, unlikely to have succeeded, had the parts assigned to the conspirators been differently cast. His design appears to have been to decoy the king, by some plausible tale, into his castle of Gowrie, on the Tay; to separate him from his suite, and compel him by threats of instant death, to suffer himself to be carried aboard a boat which should be waiting on the river for the purpose. This was the first act in the projected plot. In the second, the vessel was to push instantly out to sea; and the royal prisoner was to be conveyed, in a few hours, to an impregnable little fortalice which overhung the German Ocean, and where, if well victualled, a garrison of twenty men could, for months, have defied a royal army. To communicate with England, and administer the government in the royal name, but under the dictation of Gowrie and his faction, would then be easy. It had been repeatedly done before in the history of the country, and very recently in the Raid of Ruthven; why then should it not be done again?

In all this projected scheme there was some rashness; something smacking of youth, audacity, and revenge; but there was also some sagacity. Since the days of the conspiracy against Riccio, down to the Raid of Ruthven, most of the plots which chequer and stain the history of the country had failed, from admitting too many into their secret. A band or covenant had been drawn up; a correspondence opened with England; the envoy at the Scottish court had been admitted to the secret; the Kirk consulted; the pulse of the burghs and barons felt; and so many points presented for suspicion to work on, and treachery to be rewarded, that success was unlikely, and discovery almost inevitable. That Gowrie had observed this, and had deeply studied the subject of "Conspiracies against Princes" under Machiavel, the most acute of masters, we know from a curious anecdote preserved by Spottiswood. A short time before his unhappy death, a friend found him in the library, with a volume of the great Florentine in his hand. On inquiring the subject of his studies, showing him the book, he observed, that it was a collection of the most famous conspiracies against princes. "A perilous subject," was the reply. "Yes," said the young conspirator; "perilous; because most of such plots have been foolishly contrived, and have embraced too many in the secret. He who goes about such a business, should beware of putting any man on his counsel."[1]

Under this idea, Gowrie admitted to his secret as few associates as possible; and his accomplices were men on whom he had the most implicit reliance. They appear to have been only four in number: his brother, Alexander Ruthven, commonly called the Master of Ruthven, who held an office in the king's chamber; Robert Logan of Restalrig, a border baron, distantly connected with the Gowrie family; a third person of rank and consequence, but whose name is still a mystery; and lastly, an old ruffian follower of Logan's, called Laird Bower. Logan was a man already known to Sir Robert Cecil; who, on making some inquiries regarding him in 1599, received from the celebrated Lord Wylloughby, then governor of Berwick, this brief character of the Scottish border baron:—"There is such a Laird of Lesterlig, as you write of: a main loose man; a great favourer of thieves reputed; yet a man of a good clan, as they here term it; and a good fellow."[2] The character here given of Logan was far too favourable; for there is no doubt that he was a desperate, reck-

[1] Spottiswood, History, p. 460. Hailes' Notes on the Gowrie Conspiracy.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Lord Wylloughby to Cecil, January 1, 1598-9. The name is sometimes written Lestelrig, sometimet Restalrig.

less, and unprincipled villain, although a person of a good house, and true to his friends, according to the principles of that border code under which he had been bred. He had run through a large estate in every kind of dissipation and excess, was a mocker at religion, had been a constant follower of the notorious Bothwell, and was now drowned in debt; yet, bad as he was, Laird Bower, his brother conspirator, his chamberlain, or household man, as he termed him, appears to have been a shade blacker. It was to this old borderer that the perilous task was committed, of carrying the letters which passed between Logan and Gowrie. Bower had received his nurture and education in the service of David Hume of Manderston, commonly called "Davie the Devil;" and in this Satanic school had become a more debauched and daring ruffian than his master; who described him, in writing to Gowrie, as a worthy fellow, who would not spare to ride to *Hell's yett*[1] to pleasure him.[2] Of the character of the other unknown conspirator nothing can be said, as his name remains yet a shadow. But if we may trust to popular report, Alexander, the Master of Ruthven, was a young man of the highest promise; amiable, accomplished, gentle almost to a fault, and a universal favourite at court; yet, strange as it may appear, the execution of that part of the plot requiring the utmost sternness, promptitude, and decision, was committed to this youth. He it was on whom his brother laid the task of decoying the king into Gowrie House, and forcing him into the boat; whilst Gowrie himself undertook to amuse or intimidate the suite; and Logan was to have his house of Fastcastle ready to receive the royal prisoner.

Both these mansions, Gowrie House and Fastcastle, were, from their construction and situation, singularly well calculated for the attempt against the king. The first was a large baronial mansion, of quadrangular shape, built in the town of Perth, and on the border of the Tay, the river washing the garden; and fortified by a wall which ran along the bank, and was flanked by two strong towers. Its apartments were numerous; arranged, as was usual in those times, *en suite*, and so as to communicate with each other; and amongst them was a long gallery, which extended along one side of the square, and communicated, by a door at the end, with a chamber which, in its turn, led to a small circular room constructed in the interior of a turret. This gallery, and the other apartments, were accessible by a broad oaken staircase; but the turret, or round room, could be reached also by a back spiral turnpike: so that a person who had entered it through the gallery, might escape, or could be conveyed away without again traversing the principal staircase.

Fastcastle, on the coast of Berwickshire, the residence or den of Logan, was the very opposite of Gowrie House; being a single square and massive feudal tower, standing on the brink of a steep and almost perpendicular black rock, which rose to the height of two hundred feet above the German Ocean. From the sea, it was completely inaccessible, unless to those who knew the secret of its steps cut in the rock, and could unlock the iron bolts and doors which defended them; and on the land side, the isthmus on which it stood was connected with the mainland by so narrow a neck, that any attempt to force its little drawbridge was hopeless. The distance from Gowrie House to Fastcastle, by sea, was about seventy miles; from Fastcastle to the English border, about twenty-five miles.

It is now time to introduce the reader to the most interesting part of this strange story: the letters of the conspirators themselves. It appears from these documents, which were not discovered until many years after the deep tragedy in which the conspiracy concluded, that early in the month of July 1600, Gowrie wrote to Logan appointing a secret meeting, to confer "*on the purpose he knew of.*" This

[1] Hell's yett, *i.e.* Hell's gate.

[2] Logan to Gowrie, in Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 285.

letter is not now in existence; but it was brief, alluding to what had passed before between them, and stating that Logan's absence in Lothian had prevented Gowrie from coming to see him at Fastcastle.[1] On the 18th July 1600, Logan addressed a letter, which still remains, to the unknown conspirator already mentioned. It was in these terms:—

"RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,—My duty with service remembered. Please you understand, my Lord of Go. and some others, his lordship's friends and weil-willers, who tender his lordship's better preferment, are upon the resolution you know, for the revenge of that cause; and his lordship has written to me anent that purpose; whereto I will accord, in case you will stand to and bear a part: and before ye resolve, meet me and Mr A. R. [Alexander Ruthven] in the Canongate on Tuesday the next week; and be as wary as ye can. Indeed, M. A. R. spoke with me four or five days since; and I have promised his lordship an answer within ten days at farthest.

"As for the purpose, how M. A. R. [Mr Alexander Ruthven,] and I have set down the course, it will be ane very easy done turn, and not far by[2] that form, with the like stratagem, whereof we had conference in Cap.h. But in case you and M. A. R. forgather,[3] because he is somewhat *consety*,[4] for God's sake be very wary with his reckless *toys of Padua:* for he told me one of the strangest tales of a nobleman of Padua that ever I heard in my life, resembling the like purpose." After assuring him that he might place implicit faith in Laird Bower, the bearer of the letter, Logan again thus alluded to the plot:—

"Always to our purpose, I think it best for our plat[5] that we meet all at my house of Fastcastle: for I have concluded with M. A. R. how I think it shall be meetest to be convoyed quietest in a boat by sea; at which time, upon sure advertisement, I shall have the place very quiet and well provided.

"And as I receive your answer, I will post this bearer to my lord. And therefore, I pray you, as you love your own life, as it is not a matter of mowise,[6] be circumspect in all things, and take no fear but all shall be well."

Logan then went on to warn his friend not to reveal anything of the plot either to Gowrie's old tutor, Mr William Rhynd, or to his brother Lord Home, before "the turn were done." He thus concluded:—

"When you have read, send this letter back again with the bearer, that I may see it burnt myself; for so is the fashion in such errands; and, if you please, write your answer on the back hereof, in case ye will take my word for the credit of the bearer. And use all expedition; for the turn wald not[7] be long delayed. Ye know the king's hunting will be shortly; and then shall be the best time, as M. A. R. has assured me that my lord has resolved to enterprise that matter."[8]

This letter of Logan's was dated from Fastcastle, 18th July; and on the same day he sent the following letter, connected with the conspiracy, to Laird Bower, from his house in the Canongate of Edinburgh, informing him of a second letter "concerning the purpose which he had received from Gowrie."

"LAIRD BOWER,—I pray you hast you fast to me about the errand I told you, and we shall confer at length of all things. I have received a new letter from my Lord of Go. concerning the purpose that M. A. his lordship's brother, spake to me before; and I perceive I may have advantage of Dirlton in case his other matter take effect, as we hope it shall. Always, I beseech you, be at me the morn[9] at even; for I have assured his lordship's servant that I shall send you over the water within three days, with a full resolution of all my will anent[10] all

[1] Examinations of George Sprot, printed in Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 272.
[2] By; different from.
[3] Forgather; meet.
[4] *Consety;* flighty.
[5] Plat; plot, scheme.
[6] Mowise; *mows*—mummery.
[7] Wald not; cannot.
[8] Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. pp. 282, 283.
[9] The morn; to-morrow.
[10] Anent; touching.

purposes. As I shall indeed recommend you and your trustiness to his lordship, as ye shall find an honest recompense for your pains in the end. I care not for all the land I have in this kingdom, in case I get a grip [1] at Dirlton: for I esteem it the pleasantest dwelling in Scotland. For God's cause, keep all things very secret, that my lord, my brother, get no knowledge of our purposes; for I [wald] rather be eirdit [2] quick." [3]

Between the 18th of July, the date of both these letters, and the 27th of the same month, the conspirators appear to have met; and the manner in which the attempt was to be made was arranged. It only remained to fix the precise day. This appears from the following letter of Logan, sent to the unknown conspirator, from his house in the Canongate, on the 27th of July:—

"RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,—All my hartly duty with humble service remembered. Since I have taken on hand to enterprise with my Lo. of Go. [Lord of Gowrie,] your special and only best beloved, as we have set down the plat already, I will request you that ye will be very circumspect and wise, that no man get an advantage of us. I doubt not but ye know the peril to be both life, land, and honour, in case the matter be not wisely used. And for my own part, I shall have a special respect to my promise that I have made to his Lo. and M. A. his Lo. brother, although the scaffold were set up. If I cannot win to Falkland the first night, I shall be timely in St Johnston on the morn. Indeed, I lippened [4] for my Lo. himself, or else M. A. his Lo. brother, at my house of Fastcastle, as I wrote to them both. Always I repose on your advertisement of the precise day with credit to the bearer; for howbeit he be but a silly, auld, gleid [5] carle, I will answer for him that he shall be very true.

"I pray you, Sir, read, and either burn or send again with the bearer; for I dare hazard my life, and all I have else in the world, on his message, I have such proof of his constant truth. So commits you to Christ's holy protection." [6]

Two days after this, on the 29th July, and only a week before the attempt and fatal catastrophe, Logan sent Laird Bower with the following letter to Gowrie. I give it all, as every word of its contents is of importance:—

"MY LO.—My most humble duty, &c. At the receipt of your Lo. letter I am so comforted, especially at your Lo. purpose communicated to me therein, that I can neither utter my joy, nor find myself able how to encounter your Lo. with due thanks. Indeed, my Lord, at my being last in the town, M. A. your Lo. brother, imparted somewhat of your lordship's intention anent that matter unto me; and if I had not been busied about some turns of my own, I thought to have come over to S. Jo.[7] and spoken with your Lo. Yet always, my Lo. I beseech your Lo. both for the safety of your honour, credit, and, more than that, your life, my life, and the lives of many others, who may, perhaps, innocently smart for that turn afterwards, in case it be revealed by any; and likewise the utter wrecking of our lands and houses, and extirpating of our names; look that we be all as sure as your Lo.; and I myself shall be for my own part; and then I doubt not but, with God's grace, we shall bring our matter to a fine,[8] which shall bring contentment to us all that ever wished for the revenge of the Maschevalent[9] massacring of our dearest friends.

"I doubt not but M. A. your Lo. brother, has informed your Lo. what course I laid down to bring all your Lo. associates to my house of Fastcastle by sea, where I should have all materials in readiness for their safe receiving a land, and into my house, making, as it were, but a matter of pastime in a boat on the sea, in this

1 Grip; hold.
2 Eirdit quick; buried alive.
3 Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 283.
4 Looked for; expected.
5 Gleid; squinting.
6 Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 284.
7 St Johnston, or Perth.
8 End.
9 Machiavelian.

fair summer tide; and none other strangers to haunt my house while[1] we had concluded on the laying of our platt, which is already devised by Mr Alexander and me. And I would wish that your lordship would either come or send M. A. to me; and thereafter I should meet your Lo. in Leith, or quietly in Restalrig, where we should have prepared a fine *hattit kit*,[2] with sugar, confits, and wine, and thereafter confer on matters: and the sooner we brought our purpose to pass, it were the better, before harvest. Let not M. W. R. [Mr Wm. Rhynd,] your old pedagogue ken[3] of your coming; but rather would I, if I dare be so bold to entreat your Lo. once to come and see my own house, where I have kept my Lo. Bo. [Lord Bothwell] in his greatest extremities, say the K. and his Council what they would. And in case God grant us a happy success in this errand, I hope both to have your Lo. and his Lo. with many others of your lovers and his, at a good dinner before I die. Always, I hope that the king's buck-hunting at Falkland this year shall prepare some dainty cheer for us against that dinner the next year. *Hoc jocose*, to animate your Lo. at this time; but afterwards we shall have better occasion to make merry.

"I protest my Lo. before God, I wish nothing with a better heart, nor[4] to achieve to that which your Lo. would fain attain unto; and my continual prayer shall tend to that effect: and with the large spending of my lands, goods, yea the hazard of my life shall not affright me from that, although the scaffold were already set up, before I should falsify my promise to your Lo.; and persuade your Lo. thereof. I trow your Lo. has a proof of my constancy ere now.

"But, my Lo. whereas your Lo. desires, in my letter, that I crave my Lo. my brother's mind, anent this matter; I alluterly[5] dissent from that, that he should ever be a councillor thereto: for, in good faith, he will never help his friend, nor harm his foe. Your Lo. may confide more in this old man, the bearer hereof, my man Laird Bower, nor in my brother; for I lippen[6] my life, and all I have else, in his hands: and I trow he would not spare to ride to hell's yett[7] to pleasure me; and he is not beguiled of my part to him. Always, my Lo. when your Lo. has read my letter, deliver it to the bearer again, that I may see it burnt with my ain een;[8] as I have sent your Lo. letter to your Lo. again: for so is the fashion, I grant. And I pray your Lo. rest fully persuaded of me, and of all that I have promised; for I am resolved, howbeit I were to die the morn,[9] I man[10] entreat your Lo. to exspede[11] Bower, and give him strait direction, on pain of his life, that he take never a wink of sleep until he see me again, or else he will utterly undo us. I have already sent another letter to the gentleman your Lo. kens,[12] as the bearer will inform your Lo. of his answer and forwardness with your Lo.; and I shall show your Lo. farther, at meeting, when and where your Lo. shall think meetest. To which time, and ever, commits your Lo. to the protection of Almighty God.—From Gunnisgreen, the 29th of July, 1600.

"Your Lo. own sworn and bound man to obey and serve, with efald[13] and ever ready service, to his utter power, to his life's end. RESTALRIG.

"Prays your Lo. hold me excused for my unseemly letter, quilk is not so well written as mister[14] were; for I durst not let ony[15] of my writers ken of it, but took two sundry idle days to it myself.

"I will never forget the good sport that M. A. your Lo. brother, told me of a nobleman of Padua: it comes so oft to my memory; and indeed, it is a

1 While; until.
2 A Scottish dish, composed of coagulated milk, and eaten with rich cream and sugar.
3 Know. 4 Nor; than.
5 Alluterly; entirely.
6 Lippen; trust.
7 Hell's gate. 8 Own eyes.
9 Although I were to die to-morrow.
10 Must. 11 Hasten. 12 Knows.
13 True. 14 Need were. 15 Any.

paras teur[1] to this purpose we have in hand."[2]

Two days after the date of this letter to Gowrie, on the 31st of July, Logan, being still at his house of Gun's Green, wrote the following letter to the unknown conspirator:—

"RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,—My hartly duty remembered. Ye know I told you, at our last meeting in the Canongate, that M. A. R. my Lord of Gowrie's brother, had spoken with me anent the matter of our conclusion; and, for my own part, I shall not be hindmost. And sensyne[3] I gat a letter fra his lordship's self for that same purpose; and upon the receipt thereof, understanding his lordship's frankness and forwardness in it, God kens[4] if my heart was not lifted ten stegess.[5] I posted this same bearer till his lordship, to whom you may concredit all your heart in that as well as I; for an[6] it were my very soul, I durst make him messenger thereof, I have sic[7] experience of his truth in many other things. He is a silly, auld, gleid[8] carle,[9] but wondrous honest. And as he has reported to me his lordship's answer, I think all matters shall be concluded at my house of Fastcastle; for I and M. A. R. concluded that you should come with him and his lordship, and only ane other man with you, being but only four in company, intil[10] one of the great fishing-boats by sea, to my house; where ye shall land as safely as on Leith shore. And the house, agane[11] his lordship's coming, to be quiet: and when you are about half a mile from shore, to gar set forth a waff.[12] But, for God's sake, let neither any knowledge come to my lord my brother's ears, nor yet to M. W. R. my lordship's auld pedagogue; for my brother is 'kittle to shoe behind,'[13] and dare not enterprise for fear: and the other will dissuade us from our purpose with reasons of religion; which I can never abide.

"I think there is none of a noble heart, or carries a stomach worth a penny, but they would be glad to see a contented revenge of Grey Steil's death.[14] And the sooner the better, or else we may be marred and frustrated: and, therefore, pray his lordship be quick. And bid M. A. remember the sport he told me of Padua; for I think with myself that the cogitation on that should stimulate his lordship. And, for God's cause, use all your courses *cum discrecione*. Fail not, Sir, to send back again this letter: for M. A. learnit me that fashion, that I may see it destroyed myself. So, till your coming, and ever, commits you heartily to Christ's holy protection.—From Gunnisgreen, the last of July, 1600."

These letters explain themselves. Their import cannot be mistaken: their authenticity since the recent discovery of the originals cannot be questioned; they still exist;[15] and although they do not open up all the particulars of the intended attempt, they establish the reality of the Gowrie conspiracy beyond the possibility of a doubt. The first proves that the Master of Ruthven and Logan had set down the course or plot for the preferment of Gowrie and the revenge of his father's death; that the conspirators were to meet at Fastcastle; and that they had fixed "the king's hunting" as the most favourable time for their attempt. Logan, it is seen from the same letter, did not think his brother, Lord Home, or Gowrie's old tutor, Mr William Rhynd, by any means safe persons to be intrusted with the secret of the conspiracy. In the second letter to Bower, we have a glance at the rich bribe by which Gowrie had secured

[1] Apropos, in point.
[2] Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. pp. 284, 286.
[3] Since then.
[4] Knows.
[5] Stages, degrees.
[6] If.
[7] Such.
[8] Old, squinting.
[9] *Carle*, a man past fifty years of age.
[10] In.
[11] Agane. The house to be kept quiet, awaiting his lordship's coming.
[12] To cause set forth a signal.
[13] Difficult to shoe behind; not to be trusted.
[14] Grey Steil, a popular name of Gowrie's father, taken from an old romance called "Grey-Steil."
[15] In the General Register-House, Edinburgh.

the assistance of Logan—the estate of Dirleton; and in the third, his resolution to keep his promise "although the scaffold were set up," with his expectation to have speedy intimation sent him of the precise day when the attempt was to be made, and his presence required at St Johnston. Logan's letter to Gowrie is still more minute. It contains the determination to revenge the Machiavelian massacre of their dearest friends; the intended rendezvous of the associates at Fastcastle, who, under the mask of a pleasure party by sea, were to be conveyed into that stronghold; the previous secret conference to be held at Restalrig over their "*hattit kit and wine*;" the good cheer and happy success which the king's buck-hunting was to bring them; the solemn and earnest injunctions of secrecy,—life and lands, name and fame, hanging on the issue; the allusion to the strange tale of Padua, so similar to their present purpose, that it seems to have haunted the "consety" or high-wrought imagination of Mr Alexander Ruthven; the necessity of destroying their letters: all this is contained in Logan's letter to Gowrie himself; and in his last letter to the unknown conspirator, we have the direction how the signal is to be given at sea to those who were to be on the look-out from Fastcastle; the exultation and joy at Gowrie's frankness and forwardness; the last consultation appointed to be at Fastcastle; Logan's candid character of himself, as utterly unable to abide all arguments from religion; his exhortations to be speedy, and his anticipation of a glorious revenge for the death of "Grey Steil," the affectionate *sobriquet* or nickname of the late Earl of Gowrie. All this is so clearly established by the correspondence, and so completely proves the existence of Gowrie's plot for the surprise of the king, and the meeting of the conspirators at Fastcastle, that he who doubts must be too desperate in his scepticism to be reached by any evidence whatever. But we must proceed.

This last letter of Logan's was written on Thursday, the 31st July; and all that passed in the secret conclave of the conspirators, during the three succeeding days, till the night of Monday the 4th of August, is a blank. On that night Gowrie called his chamberlain, Andrew Henderson, into his bedchamber and commanded him to be ready to ride on the morrow early with his brother, the Master, to Falkland, and to bring back with speed any letter, or message, which he might receive from him.[1]

The morning of Tuesday, the 5th of August, found the king and his nobles in the great park at Falkland, ready to mount on horseback, and proceed to their sport. It was still early, between six and seven o'clock: all was bustle and preparation; and the king stood beside the stables surrounded by his hounds and huntsmen, when Alexander Ruthven, Gowrie's younger brother, came up, and, with a low courtesy, kneeling and uncovering, craved a moment's private audience on matter of the utmost moment. His expression was perturbed, his manner hurried; and the king, expecting a communication of importance, walked aside with him. Ruthven then declared, that he, the evening before, had met a suspicious-looking fellow without the walls of St Johnston, with his face muffled in a cloak; and, perceiving him to be terrified and astonished when questioned, he had seized him; and, on searching, had found a large pot full of gold pieces under his cloak. This treasure, with the man who carried it, he had secured, he said, in a small chamber in Gowrie House; and he now begged the king to ride with him to Perth on the instant, and make sure of it for himself, as he had not even revealed the discovery to his brother the earl. James at first disclaimed having any right to money thus found; but when the Master, to one of his questions, stated that it seemed foreign gold, the vision of crowns of the sun and Spanish priests rose to the royal suspicion; and he was about to despatch

[1] Henderson's Declaration, Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 175.

some servant of his own, to ride instantly with a warrant to the provost, and seize the treasure, when Ruthven strongly protested against it: declaring that if either the magistrates or Gowrie got their fingers on the gold, it might chance that very few pieces would ever come into his majesty's purse; and that all that he implored, in recompense for his fidelity, was that the king would ride with him to Perth, see the treasure, and judge with his own eyes.

The court was now on horseback; the morning wearing on; the baying of the hounds, and cheering of the huntsmen, told that the game was found; and the king, impatiently putting an end to the interview, promised Ruthven an answer after he had killed the buck. James then galloped off; but the story haunted him; and on the first check he sent for Ruthven, who lingered near at hand, and whispered to him that he had resolved, the moment the chase was over, to accompany him to Perth. The young man instantly despatched Andrew Henderson, the chamberlain, who, in obedience to Gowrie's orders the night before, had, with Andrew Ruthven, accompanied him to Falkland; bidding him gallop to Perth, and tell Gowrie that the king would be there within a brief space, and slenderly attended.

When the chase was ended, which lasted till near eleven, the king surprised his courtiers by telling them he meant to ride immediately to St Johnston, to speak with the Earl of Gowrie; and without giving himself or his nobles time to send for fresh horses, or waiting, as was usual, for the "*curry* of the deer,"[1] he rode off with Ruthven at so furious a pace, that he was some miles on the road before Lennox, or any of his suite, overtook him. All this time Ruthven had been agitated and restless; now pressing the king to finish the chase; now urging him not to wait for fresh horses; now insisting that neither Lennox, Mar, nor any number of his nobles should follow him, as it might spoil all: and this to such a degree that James, as he pushed on, began to suspect and hesitate, and calling Lennox aside, told him the strange errand he was riding on; asking him if Ruthven, his brother-in-law, had ever shewn any symptoms of derangement. The duke pronounced the story utterly improbable; but affirmed he had never seen any thing like madness in Ruthven. "At all events," said James, "do not you, Lennox, fail to follow me into the room where this fellow and his treasure is." This private conference was not unobserved by Ruthven. He had a short time before despatched his other servant, Andrew Ruthven, to ride forward with a second message to Perth, and now coming up close to the king, implored him to make none living acquainted with their purpose, till he had himself seen the fellow and the treasure. It seems to have been at this moment that Sir Thomas Erskine, who had overtaken the king on the road, privately asked Lennox how it came that Ruthven had got the king's ear, and carried off his majesty from his sport; to which Lennox jocularly answered, "Peace, man; we shall all be turned into gold."[2] The whole party then rode forward; and on coming within a mile of Perth, Ruthven, telling the king he must give warning to his brother, galloped on before.

We must now for a moment turn to Gowrie, whom Henderson, on his arrival at Gowrie House, found, with two friends, in his chamber. He instantly left them, and inquired, secretly and earnestly, what word he had brought from his brother: had he sent a letter; how had the king taken with the Master; who were with his majesty at the hunting, many or few; what noblemen, what names? To these hurried questions Henderson answered by giving the message sent by young Ruthven—that the king would be with him incontinent, and he must prepare dinner. He added, that James had received the Master kindly, and laid his hand on his

[1] French, *curer*; to cleanse; the ripping up and cleansing the deer.

[2] Lloyd's Worthies, p. 783.

shoulder when he did his courtesy: that his majesty had sundry of his own suite with him, and some Englishmen; and that the only nobleman he noticed was my lord duke. This was at ten o'clock.[1] Henderson then went to his own house, pulled off his boots, and returned to Gowrie House about eleven, when the earl commanded him to put on his "*secret*,[2] and plate sleeves," as he would require his assistance to seize a Highlandman in the Shoe Gate. At half-past twelve Gowrie took his dinner, having, as his guests, three friends of the neighbourhood; and as they sat at table, Andrew Ruthven, the Master's second messenger, entered the room, and whispered to the earl. Soon after came the Master himself, upon which Gowrie and his friends rose; and now for the first time openly alluding to the royal visit, he assembled his servants, and walked to the Inch or meadow near the town, where he met the king.

James's train did not exceed twelve or fifteen persons, including Lennox, Mar, Sir Thomas Erskine, John Ramsay his page, Dr Hugh Herries, Lords Lindores and Inchaffray, with a few others. They wore their green hunting-dresses, and were wholly without armour; a horn slung over their shoulder, and a sword or deer-knife at their girdle, being all they carried. Gowrie's servants and followers amounted nearly to fourscore; but many of these must have been townsmen and lookers-on. On coming to Gowrie House the king called for a drink, and was somewhat annoyed at having to wait long for his welcome cup, and more than an hour for his dinner. During this interval, Alexander Ruthven sent for the key of the long room, called the Gallery Chamber, which immediately adjoined the cabinet where the king dined. At the end of this gallery was another apartment, which opened into a circular room, formed in the interior of a turret; and this room, it is important to observe, could be entered, not only by the door at the end of the gallery, but by another door communicating with a back-stair or turnpike, called the Black Turnpike. Soon after the king had sat down to dinner, Gowrie, who waited upon him, sent for Henderson, and taking him aside secretly, bade him go to his brother in the gallery. He obeyed; found Mr Alexander there, and almost instantly after was joined by the earl himself, who commanded him to remain where he was, and obey the Master's orders.[3] Henderson was now fully armed, all except the head: he had noted that the tale about seizing a Highland thief in the Shoe Gate was a false pretence; and beginning to suspect some treason, asked in an agitated tone, what they were about to do with him? The only reply of Gowrie and the Master was to point to the little chamber, make him enter the door, and look him up.

All this occupied but a few minutes, and Gowrie then returned to the king, who was sitting at his dessert; whilst the duke and the rest of the suite were dining in the next room. They had nearly finished their repast, when James, in a bantering manner, accused Gowrie of having been so long in foreign parts as to have forgotten his Scottish courtesies. "Wherefore, my lord," said he, "since ye have neglected to drink either to me or my nobles, who are your guests, I must drink to you my own welcome. Take this cup, and pledge them the *king's scoll*[4] in my name." Gowrie, accordingly, calling for wine, joined the duke and his fellows, who were getting up from table; and at this instant Alexander Ruthven, seizing the moment when the king was alone, whispered him that now was the time to go. James, rising up, bade him call Sir Thomas Erskine; but he evaded the message, and Erskine never received it. Lennox, too, remembering the king's injunctions, spoke of following his majesty; but Gowrie prevented him, saying, his highness had retired

[1] Henderson's Declaration, Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 176.

[2] A secret shirt of mail worn under the clothes.

[3] Henderson's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 177.

[4] The king's scoll; the king's health.

on a quiet errand, and would not be disturbed;[1] after which, he opened the door leading to his pleasure-ground, and with Lennox, Lindores, and some others, passed into the garden. Thus really cut off from assistance, but believing that he would be followed by Lennox, or Erskine, James now followed Ruthven up a stair, and through a suite of various chambers, all of them opening into each other, the Master locking every door as they passed; and observing, with a smile, that now they had the fellow sure enough. At last they entered the small round room already mentioned. On the wall hung a picture with a curtain before it; beside it stood a man in armour; and as the king started back in alarm, Ruthven locked the door, put on his hat, drew the dagger from the side of the armed man, and tearing the curtain from the picture, shewed the well-known features of the late Earl of Gowrie, his father. "Whose face is that?" said he, advancing the dagger with one hand to the king's breast, and pointing with the other to the picture. "Who murdered my father? Is not thy conscience burdened by his innocent blood? Thou art now my prisoner, and must be content to follow our will, and to be used as we list. Seek not to escape; utter but a cry, [James was now looking at the window, and beginning to speak;] make but a motion to open the window, and this dagger is in thy heart." The king, although alarmed by this fierce address, and the suddenness of the danger, did not lose his presence of mind: and as Henderson was evidently no willing accomplice, he took courage to remonstrate with the Master: reminded him of the dear friendship he had borne him; and, "as for your father's death," said he, "I had no hand in it; it was my council's doing; and should ye now take my life, what preferment will it bring you? Have I not both sons and daughters? You can never be king of Scotland; and I have many good subjects who will revenge my death." Ruthven seemed struck with this, and swore he neither wanted his blood nor his life. "What racks[2] it then," said the king, "that you should not take off your hat in your prince's presence?" Upon this Ruthven uncovered, and James resumed. "What crave ye, an ye seek not my life?" "But a promise, sir," was the reply. "What promise?" "Sir," said Ruthven, "my brother will tell you." "Go fetch him then," rejoined the king; and to induce him to obey, he gave his oath, that till his return he would neither cry out nor open the window. Ruthven consented; commanded Henderson to keep the king at his peril; and left the room, locking the door behind him.

James now, for a moment, had time to breathe; and turning to Henderson, he asked him how he came there. The unhappy man declared he had been shut in like a dog. Would Gowrie do him any mischief? Henderson answered he should die first. "Open the window, then," said James; and scarce had this been done, or rather when it was being done, Ruthven broke into the room again, and swearing there was no remedy, ran in upon the king, seized him by the wrists, and attempted to bind him with a garter or silk cord which he had in his hands. James, by a strong effort, threw himself loose, exclaiming he was a free prince, and would never be bound; and Henderson at this moment wrenching away the cord, the king "leapt free," and had almost reached the window, when Ruthven again seized him by the throat with one hand, and thrust the other into his mouth, to prevent him giving the alarm. But James, now rendered desperate, and exerting his utmost strength, dragged his assailant to the window, and throwing his head half out, though Ruthven's hand was still on his throat, cried out, "Treason! help! Earl of Mar, I am murdered!" Ruthven then dragged him back into the chamber, upbraiding Henderson as a cowardly villain, who would bring

[1] Lennox's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 172.

[2] What racks; what forbids.

death upon them all, and attempted to draw his sword, which James prevented by grasping his right hand.[1] Henderson during this, unlocked the door of the room, and then stood trembling and panic-struck, whilst a desperate wrestle continued between the king and Ruthven.

Leaving James in this struggle for life, we must turn for an instant to Gowrie, who had led Lennox and the other courtiers into the garden. Whilst there, Cranston, one of his attendants, ran up, and informed them that the king had left the castle by the back way, and was riding over the Inch, upon which Gowrie called to horse; and he, Lennox, and the rest, hurrying down the great staircase, and shouting for their horses, some one asked the porter in the courtyard, if the king had passed. He declared he had not; and persisted in his denial, although his master abused him as a lying varlet. Gowrie, upon this, ran back into the house, observing to Mar, he would ascertain the truth; and returning within a few minutes, assured them that the king had really gone forth, and must now have reached the South Inch. Scarcely, however, was this falsehood uttered, when it was confuted; for at this moment James's loud cry of treason and murder was heard; and, looking up, they saw the king's face at the window of the turret, the features red and flushed with exertion, and a hand on his throat.[2] All was now horror and confusion. Sir Thomas Erskine collared Gowrie, exclaiming, "Traitor, thou shalt die! This is thy work!" but was felled to the ground by Andrew Ruthven, whilst Gowrie asserted his innocence. Lennox's first impulse was to save the king; and he, Mar, and some others, rushed up the great staircase to the hall; but finding the door locked, began to batter it with a ladder which lay hard by.[3] John Ramsay, one of the royal suite, was more fortunate. He remembered the back-entry; and running swiftly up the turnpike stair to the top, dashed open the door of the round chamber with his foot, and found himself in the presence of the king and Ruthven, who were wrestling in the middle of the chamber. James, with Ruthven's head under his arm, had thrown him down almost on his knees, whilst the Master still grasped the king's throat.[4] Ramsay was hampered by a hawk, a favourite bird of James's, which he held on his wrist; but throwing her off, and drawing his whinger,[5] he made an ineffectual blow at Ruthven; the king calling out to strike low, as the traitor had on a pyne doublet.[6] Ramsay then stabbed him twice in the lower part of the body. The king, making a strong effort, pushed him backwards through the door, down the stairs; and at this moment Sir Thomas Erskine and Dr Herries rushing up the turnpike, and encountering the unhappy youth, bleeding, and staggering upon the steps, despatched him with their swords. As he lay in his last agony, he turned his face to them, and said, feebly, "Alas! I had not the wyte o't."[7]

All this passed so rapidly, that Ramsay had only time to catch a glance of a figure in armour, standing near the king, but motionless. When he next looked, it had disappeared. This seeming apparition was Henderson, still trembling, and in amazement, from the scene he had witnessed; but who, seeing the door open, glided down the turnpike, and, as it turned out, fled instantly from the house; passing, in his flight, over the master's dead body.[8] At this moment, as Erskine and Ramsay were congratulating the king, a new tumult was heard at the end of the gallery; and they had scarcely

[1] Henderson's Declaration in Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 178.

[2] Lennox's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 173. Christie's Declaration, ibid. p. 187.

[3] Ibid. Lindores' Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 181.

[4] Ramsay's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 183.

[5] Whinger; a hunting knife.

[6] Pyne doublet; a concealed shirt of mail worn under the clothes.

[7] I had not the blame of it.

[8] Henderson's Declaration, Ramsay's Declaration, and Sir Thomas Erskine's Declaration, all printed in Pitcairn, vol. ii. pp. 175-184 inclusive.

time to hurry James into the adjoining chamber, when Gowrie himself, furious from passion, and armed with a rapier in each hand, rushed along the gallery, followed by seven of his servants, with drawn swords. His vengeance had been roused to the utmost pitch, by his having stumbled over the bleeding body of his brother; and swearing a dreadful oath that the traitors who had murdered him should die, he threw himself desperately upon Erskine and his companions, who were all wounded in the first onset, and fought at great odds, there being eight to four.[1] Yet the victory was not long doubtful; for, some one calling out that the king was slain, Gowrie, as if paralysed with horror, dropped the points of his weapons, and Ramsay, throwing himself within his guard, passed his sword through his body, and slew him on the spot. The servants, seeing their master fall, gave way, and were driven out of the gallery; and Lennox, Mar, and the rest, who were still thundering with their hammers on the outside of the great door, having made themselves known to the king and his friends within, were joyfully admitted. So effectually, however, had Ruthven secured this door, that it was only by passing a hammer through one of the shattered boards, and with it forcibly wrenching off the lock, that their entrance was effected. The first thing that met their eyes was the dead body of Gowrie lying on the floor, and the king standing unharmed beside it, although still breathless from the recent struggle, and disordered in his dress. At this moment Grahame of Balgone, one of the gentlemen who had accompanied the king from Falkland, found a silk garter lying amongst the *bent* or rough grass with which the floor of the round chamber was covered; and James immediately recognised it as the same with which Ruthven had attempted to bind his hands.[2] The king then knelt down, and surrounded by his nobles, who were all on their knees, devoutly thanked God for his deliverance, and prayed that the life which had been thus signally preserved, might be devoted to the welfare of his people.

Scarcely, however, had they risen from their act of gratitude, when a new danger began to threaten them. The city bell was heard ringing, mingled with shouts and cries of vengeance, from an immense mob who beset the outside of Gowrie House, and threatened to blow it up, and bury them in the ruins. Andrew Ruthven and Violet Ruthven, two near relatives of the family of Gowrie, had been busy in rousing the citizens; and, running wildly through the streets, vented curses and maledictions on "the bloody butchers" who had murdered their young provost and his brother. Nor did many spare to threaten the king himself; crying out, "Come down, come down, thou son of Seignor Davie! thou hast slain a better man than thyself. Come down, green coats, thieves and traitors! limmers that have slain these innocents. May God let never nane o' you have such plants of your ain!"[3] Amid this hubbub, and storm of lamentation and vengeance, James ordered the magistrates to be admitted into the house; and having informed them of all that had happened, commanded them to silence the alarum-bell, and quiet the people on their peril; which they at last with difficulty effected. He then ordered them to take care of the dead bodies; and on searching Gowrie's person, there was found in the pocket of his doublet, a little parchment bag full of "magical characters and words of enchantment," which his tutor, Rhynd, recognised as the same he had discovered him wearing at Padua.[4] A belief in sorcery was, as is well known, universal in these days; and such superstitious credit did both king and people give to the little bag of caba-

[1] Thomas Robertson's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 196; also, ibid. p. 197; Ramsay's Declaration, ibid. pp. 183, 184; and Sir Thomas Erskine's Declaration, ibid. p. 182; William Robertson's Declaration, ibid. p. 197.

[2] Grahame's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 194; also, p. 217.

[3] Grahame's Declaration, Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. pp. 197-199.

[4] Declaration of Rhynd, Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. pp. 218-220.

listic words, that they averred that no blood had issued from the wound till the spell was removed from the body, after which it gushed out profusely.

James now took horse, and although it was already eight in the evening, rode to Falkland amid crowds of his subjects, who poured in from all quarters to testify their joy at his escape. Next day the news having been brought to Edinburgh, nothing could exceed the enthusiastic demonstrations of the city; and the same scene was repeated, with still louder and more affectionate welcome, when the king, after a brief retirement at Falkland, passed over the Forth, and entered his capital. The Cross was hung with tapestry; the whole city, led by the judges and magistrates, met him on the sands at Leith; and from thence he rode in triumph, and amid an immense congregation of all classes of his people, to the Cross, where Mr Patrick Galloway preached to the multitude, gave the story of the treason, and described the miraculous escape of the monarch. His sermon still remains, an extraordinary specimen of the pulpit eloquence of the times.[1]

CHAPTER XII.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1600—1603.

The general gratulation manifested at the escape of the king from the treason of Gowrie, was not without its alloy. Though almost all believed in the reality of the conspiracy, a section of the Kirk demurred and doubted; and as the death of both the brothers had involved the particulars of the plot in extreme obscurity, the ministers not only declared it questionable that any treason had been intended, but, after a while, started the extravagant theory that the plot was a conspiracy of the king against Gowrie, not of Gowrie against the king. To examine or refute this hypothesis, after the facts which have been given, would be worse than idle; and we are not to be surprised that the incredulity of the Kirk should have incensed the king. But James adopted an unwise mode of refutation. Instead of simply insisting on the great features of the story, on the leading facts which were indisputably proved by the evidence of Lennox, Mar, Erskine, and Ramsay, and throwing aside all minor matters and apparent contradictions, which, considering the rapidity, terror, and tumult accompanying the event, confirmed rather than weakened the proof: he forgot his dignity; held repeated conferences with the recusant ministers; argued, cavilled, remonstrated, and attempted in vain to explain and reconcile every minute particular. The effect of all this was precisely what might have been anticipated: Mr Robert Bruce, and his little sceptical conclave of brethren, were quite as ingenious in their special pleading as the king; and not only obstinately refused to accuse Gowrie in their pulpits of any plot against the royal person, but insolently insinuated that their two favourites had been murdered. James, finding them immovable, banished them from the capital; and interdicted them, under pain of death, from preaching in any part of Scotland.

[1] Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 248.

This severity brought four of the recusants, Balcanquel, Watson, Hall, and Balfour, to reason; and they declared themselves thoroughly satisfied of the truth of Gowrie's treason. But Bruce was inexorable. He considered that the question involved not only the truth of the conspiracy, but the spiritual independence of the Kirk; peremptorily refused to exculpate the king, or believe in his report; and was banished to France.[1] Extreme measures were then adopted against the family of Ruthven; and in a parliament which assembled in the succeeding month of November, the revolting spectacle was exhibited of the trial for treason of the livid corpses of these unhappy brothers; which, after the doom of forfeiture had been pronounced, were hauled to the gibbet, hanged and quartered. Their quarters were then exposed in the most conspicuous places of Perth, Stirling, and Dundee, and their heads fixed on the top of the prison in Edinburgh. Nor was the ignominy heaped upon the dead greater than the severity against the living. An attempt was made, on the very night of the catastrophe, to seize the two younger brothers of the house, who, at the time, were living with their unhappy mother at Dunkeld; but a vague report of danger had reached her, and they had escaped in disguise, accompanied by their tutor, who brought them in safety to Berwick.[2] On the king's return to Falkland, on the night of the 5th of August, the sister of Gowrie, Mrs Beatrix Ruthven, who was maid of honour to the queen, was dismissed and banished from court. By an act of the same parliament which inflicted the forfeiture, the very name of Ruthven was abolished; and the brethren and posterity of the house of Gowrie declared to be for ever incapable of enjoying inheritance, place, or dignity, in Scotland. Such was the avidity with which the favourites of the court sought, for their own profit, to hunt down this ill-fated family, and fulfil the stern wishes of the king, that but for the generous protection of England, not a male of the house of Ruthven would have been left.

The relations between Elizabeth and James, previous to the conspiracy, had been, we have seen, far from friendly; and this connivance of the queen at the concealment of the young Ruthvens, with other suspicious reports which arose immediately after the catastrophe, created a strong impression in the mind of the king that the plot had been fostered in England. It was remembered that Gowrie had been admitted, immediately previous to the attempt, into the most intimate confidence of the English queen; it was observed that Rhynd, Gowrie's tutor, had been found destroying letters at the moment he was apprehended; it was reported that Nicolson, the English resident at Edinburgh, had been seen waiting, early on the morning of the 6th of August, on the shore at Leith, and had whispered to a friend, who had betrayed his secret, that he was expecting strange news from the other side of the water. The Earl of Mar accused Lord Wylloughby, the governor of Berwick, to the king, as being privy to the plot; but his only evidence seems to have been Wylloughby's intimacy with Gowrie at the court of England; and this high-minded and brave soldier, deeming his character far above such suspicion, did not condescend to confute the charge.[3] All these things, however, made an impression. When Nicolson assured the king of his devout thankfulness for his escape, the only answer he received, was an incredulous smile from James; and many of the highest rank in Scotland, and best entitled to credit, persisted in tracing the whole conspiracy to England. Many, on the other hand, insisted on the total want of all direct evidence of Gowrie's guilt; and as the letters of Logan of Restalrig had not then come to light, it was difficult to confute such sceptics. Cranston, Craig-

[1] Spottiswood, p. 461.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Scrope to Sir R. Cecil, August 11, 1600. Ibid., August 15, 1600.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper office, Nicolson to Cecil, 6th August 1600. Ibid., 11th August 1600. Ibid., B.C., Lord Wylloughby to Cecil.

engelt, and Baron, all of them servants of Gowrie, who were executed for their participation in the enterprise, had been examined by torture; and both in the agony of the "boots," and afterwards on the scaffold, confessed nothing which could implicate their unhappy master or themselves; and the letters of Nicolson, Lord Scrope, and Sir William Bowes, made little scruple of throwing the chief guilt upon the king.

Amid all this obscurity, recrimination, and conjecture, James despatched Captain Preston to carry an account of his escape to Elizabeth; and she, in her turn, sent down Sir Harry Brunker with a singular letter, written wholly in her own hand, which began with congratulations, and concluded in a tone of mingled menace and reproach. Her anger had been raised on a subject which never failed to produce in her mind unusual excitement—James's intrigues as to the succession; and after a few lines on her joy at his escape, she attacked him in the following bitter terms on his impatience for her death, and the indecent haste of his preparations:—

"And though a king I be, yet hath my funerals been prepared, as I hear, long ere, I suppose, their labour shall be needful; and do hear too much of that daily, as I may have a good memorial that I am mortal: and withall so be they, too, that make such preparation aforehand; whereat I smile, supposing that such facts may make them readier for it than I.

"Think not but how wilily soever things be carried, they are so well known that they may do more harm to *others* than to me. Of this my pen hath run farther than at first I meant, when the memory of a prince's end made me call to mind such usage, which too many countries talks of, and I cannot stop my ears from. If you will needs know what I mean, I have been pleased to impart to this my servant some part thereof; to whom I will refer me; and will pray God to give you grace to know what best becomes you.

"Your loving Sister and Cousin."[1]

What Elizabeth here alluded to by the memory of a prince's end is somewhat obscure; and her ambassador's explanation, to which she referred him, does not appear: but the subjects which had especially excited her wrath, were James's correspondence with the Earl of Essex, and his recent reception of Sir Edmund Ashfield, the same knight who had been so unceremoniously kidnapped by Bowes and Guevara, and Lord Wylloughby. It was mortifying enough to a princess clinging, as still she did, to the last remnant of life and glory, to know that her subjects (as she bitterly said) "were looking to the rising sun;" but to find them in the very act of worship, chafed her to the quick: and perhaps nothing weighed heavier against Essex, than his suspected favour for James. There is a remarkable paper preserved, in which Ashfield gave his opinion to the Scottish king on the best mode of accomplishing his great object; and although no letters between James and Essex have been discovered, there seems to be little doubt that this unfortunate nobleman, now a prisoner in the Tower, had engaged to support the claim of the Scottish monarch with the whole weight of his influence. In his advices, Ashfield complimented James on the wisdom and judgment which had distinguished his policy towards the state and people of England. It was a great matter, he observed, that none feared his future government, or had taken offence at his person. He instructed him to employ every effort to gain the common lawyers, who possessed the "gainfullest" offices; were rich and politic men, more feared than beloved by the people, yet very powerful in the state. He ought next, he said, to secure the clergy, who possessed the greatest influence in the universities; were rich; and had most of the people, and many of the nobility and gentry, at their devotion. He should assure them that he had no intention of altering the

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Royal Letters, Scotland. Copy of her Majesty's letter to the King of Scots, written with her own hand, and sent by Sir Henry Brunker, August 21, 1600.

state of religion, or their livings; which, according to the then computation of the parishes in England, amounted to nine thousand seven hundred and twenty-seven. And if (Ashfield added) the king declared his inclination to exempt them from the heavy taxes which they now paid, it would go far to bring over the whole body to his service. He also advised the king to have letters ready, at the time of Elizabeth's death, to some one or two of the chiefest "men of command" in every shire and corporation, and promised to procure him a list, not only of the names of such, but also of the collectors and tellers of the crown rents in England, to whom he might give speedy and special directions, by gracious letters, and win them to his service. His last remark related to the "citizens of London," a body of men whom he described as rich, strong, and well governed; who would stand firm to the preservation of their wealth, and keep themselves neutral till they saw which of the competitors was likely to prove the strongest, and how the game would go.[1]

Immediately after the meeting of that parliament, in November, in which the forfeiture of the Gowries took place, some unhappy differences broke out between the king and his queen; this princess having shewn a deeper commiseration for the Ruthven family than James approved of. Amongst the innumerable reports which had arisen, after the catastrophe, it had been whispered that jealousy had lent its sting to the royal wrath. But although Anne of Denmark was sufficiently gay and thoughtless to give some ground for the imputation, the common story of her passion for the Master of Ruthven seems to rest on nothing more than the merest rumour. She imprudently had given her countenance to that party at court which opposed the extreme severity of the king. It was reported that she had secretly sent for Beatrix Ruthven, and favoured her with a midnight interview in the palace. She suspected that intrigues were carrying on against her; and, on one occasion, if we may believe Nicolson the envoy of Elizabeth, was so far overcome by passion, that she openly upbraided James with a plot for her imprisonment; and warned him that he would not find her so easy a prey as an Earl of Gowrie. The probability, however, is, that all this was much exaggerated by the gossiping propensities of Nicolson: for the royal couple, whom he represented as on very evil terms on the 31st of October, had been described, in a letter written only two days before, as exceedingly loving, and almost ultra-uxorious.[2] In the midst of this alternate matrimonial shade and sunshine, Anne gave birth to a prince, afterwards the unfortunate Charles the First; whose baptism was held, with great state and pageantry, on the 30th of December.[3]

Captain Preston, James's ambassador, now returned from the court of England, and brought a more amicable letter from the queen than her former ironical epistle. In speaking of Gowrie's treason, she declared her fervent wishes, that "the bottom of such a cankered malady should be fathomed to the uttermost;" and in alluding to the sorceries of the earl, and the familiar spirits who were said to wait on his will, expressed her conviction that "none were left in hell," so detestable was the treason; but this, she concluded, ought to increase his gratitude to that Almighty Power under whose wings no infernal assaults could reach him, as it gave greater fervency to the *Amen* with which she accompanied her thanksgiving.[4] However involved or pedantic, there was no such obscurity in this letter as in the former; no dark hints or menaces; and its conciliatory tone was met by James with every friendly and grateful offer of assistance against her enemies. He revealed to her all the

[1] MS., British Museum, Julius, F. vi. 133.

[2] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, October 28, 1600. Also, ibid., same to same, October 31, 1600.

[3] Ibid., December 30, 1600.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Royal Letters. Draft copy of her majesty's letter to the King of Scots, sent by his ambassador, Mr Preston, September 14, 1600.

secret intelligence he had received from Spain, and promised his utmost efforts to raise a force of two thousand Highland soldiers, to act as auxiliaries with the English army in Ireland.[1] When this proposal, however, afterwards came before the convention of the three estates, many of the Highlanders and Islesmen sternly refused to bear arms against the Irish; a race to whom they were linked, they said, by common descent and a common language; whilst the Saxons, or English, whose battles they were to fight, had long been the bitter enemies, both of themselves and their Irish ancestors. What impression English gold might have made on these patriotic scruples is not certain; for, before the muster could be made, a signal victory of the deputy, Lord Mountjoy, over the united forces of Tyrone and the Spaniards, rendered all foreign assistance unnecessary.[2]

The fate of Essex, who now lay a condemned prisoner in the Tower, was a subject of deep interest to James. What negotiations had passed between this unfortunate nobleman and the King of Scots, it is extremely difficult to discover. No letters from Essex to James, or from the king to Essex, have been preserved; at least none have been discovered: and the assertion of Rapin, which has been more or less copied by all succeeding English historians, that James was actually a fellow-conspirator with him in his insane project for the seizure of the queen's person, and that it was a part of their plot to dethrone Elizabeth and crown James, is utterly improbable, and supported by no evidence whatever. That the king, in common with all who knew him best, esteemed and admired Essex, and that Essex had written to James after his return from Ireland, is, however, certain; nor is it at all improbable that the English earl had laboured to estrange the Scottish monarch from Cecil, and to persuade him that the secretary was an enemy to his claim, and favoured the title of the Infanta. There undoubtedly was a time, as we learn from James's secret instructions to Burlie,[3] (whom he despatched in 1601 to the Grand Duke of Tuscany,) when the Scottish king hesitated whether it would be best to secure the aid of the party of Essex or of Cecil in his secret negotiations with England; but the defeat and imprisonment of this unfortunate nobleman convinced him that his case was desperate; and there is an expression in one of James's memoranda, from which we may infer, that to conciliate Elizabeth he had meanly sent her one of Essex's letters to himself.

However this may be, the Scottish king some time before the trial of Essex, had determined to communicate with Elizabeth on some points wherein he found himself aggrieved; and he now, with the view of interceding for his gallant and unfortunate friend, despatched to London two ambassadors, the Earl of Mar, one of his highest and most trusted nobles, and Mr Edward Bruce, abbot of Kinloss, a person of great judgment and experience. They set off towards the middle of February 1601,[4] with a gallant suite of more than forty persons; and on their arrival at Berwick were received by the governor, Lord Wylloughby, who gathered from them, in the course of their brief intercourse, that the chief object of their mission was to congratulate the English queen on her escape from the treason of Essex, and to remonstrate against the reception and relief of Gowrie's brothers in England.[5] In their conversations with this nobleman, they appear to have avoided any allusion to the probable fate of Essex; yet that James had directed them to intercede for his friend cannot be doubted. His

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Royal Letters, Nicolson to Cecil, July 4, 1602.

[2] Ibid., January 3, 1601-2. Also, ibid., February 6, 1601-2.

[3] Hailes' Cecil Correspondence, p. 112.

[4] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, February 15, 1600-1. Written on the day Nicolson communicated to James the intelligence of the determination to execute Essex. Certain news of his death were brought on 4th March, 1600-1.

[5] Ibid., B.C., Lord Wylloughby to Cecil, to February 22, 1601, following the Scottish computation; 1600 the English.

compassion, however, came too late; for Essex was beheaded before the ambassadors reached London. The original instructions for their mission have not been preserved; but a letter of their royal master to Mar and Kinloss, written soon after their arrival, opens up to us much of its secret history. The real purpose for which they went, was to feel the pulse of the English nobility and people on the great subject of the succession; to secure friends; to discover and undermine opponents; to conciliate the queen, and, if possible, procure from her a more distinct recognition of James's title to the throne: above all, to gain Secretary Cecil, who was now at the head of the English government, and on whose friendly disposition James had long believed that everything depended. Many others had been forward in offering their assistance; and to all he prudently gave a cordial reception; but to Cecil alone he looked as the man who had the game in his hand, and whom he described in his letter of instructions as "king there in effect."[1]

On the first audience of Mar and Kinloss, however, all seemed likely to miscarry. From the coldness and jealousy of Elizabeth, she appeared to resent some expressions in the king's sealed letter, written wholly in his own hand, and expostulating with her, in very decided terms, against her too easy belief of the unjust imputations so generally circulated against him. He declared that he was impelled by their long friendship and her own example, to unbosom his griefs, and not to suffer any misconstrued thoughts against her actions to take harbour in his heart; for which purpose, having already experienced the mischief which both had suffered from the employment of inferior diplomatic agents, he had now sent one of his highest nobles, the Earl of Mar, and one of his wisest councillors, the Abbot of Kinloss; both of them men of known and constant affection to the continuance of the amity between the two nations and their sovereigns; and whom he had fully instructed to deal with all "that honest plainness which was the undisseverable companion of true friendship."[2]

Their plainness, however, seems to have been rather too much for the temper of Elizabeth, which, at no time very amiable, was now fretted and broken by her increasing infirmities. "Her majesty," said Cecil to Nicolson, "gave the Earl of Mar nothing but negative answers; the matters being of so sour a nature to the queen, who loves neither importunity nor expostulation." When the ambassadors explained the great pecuniary embarrassments of their royal master, and his hopes that, having done so much to assist her against their common enemies, he now expected some return in current coin, she met the proposal with a haughty denial. She would give, she said, no ready money; but, if he continued to deserve it, his pension should be augmented; and in the meantime, it would be well if he, who boasted of his services against the common enemy, would cease all traffic with Spain, and receive less frequent messages from Rome. As to Lady Lennox's lands, which he claimed so confidently, he should not receive a fraction of their rents; his title to them, she thought, was still *in nubibus;* and till he made it out more clearly, the estates were in safe hands. For the other matters, on which they had shewn themselves so importunate, they were of too delicate and important a nature to be suddenly handled; and she wondered, she said, at the boldness and perseverance with which they had pressed upon her, and dared to broach to her council, so forbidding a subject.[3] This, of course, alluded to the succession; which, reminding her

[1] Secret Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, by Lord Hailes, p. 12. From a MS. letter, State-paper Office, James Hudson to Cecil, March 7, 1600-1, it appears the ambassadors arrived in London early in March. Their audience seems to have been on the 22d of March. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hudson to Cecil, March 20, 1600-1.

[2] State-paper Office, Royal Letters, Scotland, James to Elizabeth, wholly in the king's own hand, February 10, 1601.

[3] MS. Letter, British Museum, Titus, C. vii. f. 124, Elizabeth to James, May 11, 1601.

of the probability of her near dissolution, proved unpalatable in the extreme; so that the ambassadors wrote to the king in the lowest spirits, and strongly remonstrated with Secretary Cecil on their strange reception. Nothing in the world, they said, in addressing this minister, but their uncomfortable experience, could have persuaded them that his royal mistress would have treated the offers which regarded her own safety, and the welfare of her people, with so little regard; whilst, on the other hand, she gave so ready an ear to the enemies of their master, and the vile slanders which had been circulated against him. They must make bold to tell him, that there was a great difference between vigilancy and credulity; and that it formed no part of wisdom, "*ponere rumores ante salutem.*" [1]

It is interesting to attend to the directions which this unpromising state of things drew from the Scottish king. The ambassadors, it would appear, had sought his instructions as to the terms in which they ought to leave the English queen, if she continued in this unpropitious and distant temper. "As to your doubt," said he, "in what sort to leave there,[2] it must be according to the answer you receive to the former demands: for if ye be well satisfied therein, then must ye have a sweet and kind parting; but if ye get nothing but a flat and obstinate denial, which I do surely look for, then are ye, in both the parts of your commission, to behave yourself thus:—

"First, ye must be the more careful, since ye come so little speed in your public employment with the queen, to set forward so much the more your *private* negotiation with the country; and if ye see that the people be not in the highest point of discontentment, (whereof I already spake,) then must ye, by your labours with them, make your voyage at least not all utterly unprofitable; which doth consist in these points: *First*, to obtain all the certainty ye can of the town of London, that in due time they will favour the right; *Next*, to renew and confirm your acquaintance with the Lieutenant of the Tower; *Thirdly*, to obtain as great a certainty as ye can of the fleet, by the means of Lord Henry Howard's nephew, and of some seaports; *Fourthly*, to secure the hearts of as many noblemen and knights as ye can get dealing with, and to be resolved what every one of their parts shall be at the great day; *Fifthly*, to foresee anent[3] armour for every shire, that against that day my enemies have not the whole commandment of the armour, and my friends only be unarmed; *Sixthly*, that, as ye have written, ye may distribute good seminaries[4] through every shire, that may never leave working in the harvest until the day of reaping come; and generally to leave all things in such certainty and order, as the enemies be not able, in the meantime, to lay such bars in my way as shall make things remediless, when the time shall come.

"Now, as to the terms ye shall leave in with the queen, in case of the foresaid flat denial, let your behaviour ever be with all honour, respect, and love to her person; but, at your parting, ye shall plainly declare unto her, that she cannot use me so hardly as it shall be able to make me forget any part of that love that I owe to her as to my nearest kinswoman; and that the greatest revenge I shall ever take of her, shall be to pray to God to open her eyes and to let her see how far she is wronged by such base instruments about her, as abuse her ears; and that although I shall never give her occasion of grief in her time, yet the day may come when I shall crave an account at them of their presumption, when there will be no bar betwixt me and them." [5]

Nothing could be more manly and judicious than this advice to his ambassadors; nothing was more fitted to

[1] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, D. ii. f. 470, Earl of Mar and Mr Bruce abbot of Kinloss to Secretary Cecil, April 29, 1601.

[2] To leave there, *i.e.*, in what terms you take your leave.

[3] *i.e.* Regarding.

[4] Secret agents.

[5] Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, p. 9.

raise his character in the eyes of the queen herself, than a line of conduct at once affectionate and firm. Nor were his sentiments and instructions less sound with regard to Secretary Cecil, and those other powerful nobles whom he, at this time, suspected of hostility to his claim, and from whom he had expected better things.

"You shall plainly declare," said he, "to Mr Secretary and his followers, that since now, when they are in their kingdom, they will thus misknow *me*, when the chance shall turn I shall cast a deaf ear to *their* requests: and whereas now I would have been content to have given them, by your means, a pre-assurance of my favour, if at this time they had pressed to deserve the same; so now they, contemning it, may be assured never hereafter to be heard, but all the queen's hard usage of me to be hereafter craved at their hands."[1]

This last menace, however, was wholly unnecessary. Cecil, whose prudence had led him, for some years past, to keep aloof from the King of Scots, and to conciliate the favour of his royal mistress by turning a deaf ear to all proposals from that suspected quarter, was too acute a courtier, and too keenly alive to his own interest, not to discern the exact moment when perseverance in this principle would have been visited with the total ruin of his power. That moment had now arrived. Elizabeth's health was completely shattered; and however earnestly she struggled to conceal the truth from herself, or to assume her usual gaiety before her people, it was but too evident that, after her long and proud walk of glory and strength, her feet were beginning to stumble upon the dark mountain; and that the time could not be very far distant when the silver cord must be loosed, and the golden bowl be broken. With this prospect before him, Cecil opened, with extraordinary caution, and the most solemn injunctions and oaths of concealment,[2] a negotiation with Mar and Kinloss; and James, who had hitherto suspected him, not only welcomed the advances, but soon gave him his full confidence, and intrusted everything to his management and address. How all this was effected, what were the steps which led from distrust to reconciliation, and from this to undoubting and almost exclusive confidence, cannot be ascertained; but two facts are certain and full of meaning: the first, that Cecil, as appears by a paper preserved at Hatfield, advanced ten thousand pounds out of his own pocket to James, which was never repaid; the second, that this able diplomatist, from being first minister to Elizabeth, upon the death of his mistress stepped at once, without question or opposition, into the same high office under James.

Meanwhile the Scottish ambassadors profited by this secret influence; and acting under the instructions of one who had the deepest insight into the character of the queen and the state of the country, were able to follow out their instructions with infinitely greater success than on their first arrival. After a residence of three months in England,[3] they returned to James in the beginning of June; and although all had not succeeded to the extent of his wishes, the assurances which they brought from Elizabeth were friendly and encouraging. She expressed her astonishment, indeed, that the king should have again pressed upon her the same disagreeable matter, on which she had hoped he was already satisfied. It was a bold thing, she said, for any subject of hers to communicate with the King of Scots on so great a cause, without her privity; and he had done well to address her openly: for he might assure himself that she alone could do him good: all *byways* would turn to dust and smoke. As to his griefs, to which he alluded in his letter, her conscience acquitted her of every action which should give him the slightest annoyance; yet she took

[1] Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, pp. 8, 9, 10.

[2] Ibid., pp. 190, 191; also, pp. 202, 203.

[3] From about February 20th, till June 2d, 1601.

it kindly that he had unbosomed them, and had sent her so "well-chosen a couple" as Mar and Kinloss. Her letter concluded with this warning, embodied in her usual style of mystery and innuendo :—

"Let not shades deceive you, which may take away best substance. . . . An upright demeanour bears ever more poise than all disguised shows of good can do. Remember, that a bird of the air, if no other instrument, to an honest king shall stand instead of many feigned practices to utter aught that may any wise touch him. And so leaving my scribbles, with my best wishes that you scan what works becometh best a king, and what in end will best avail him, [I rest] your loving sister, that longs to see you deal as kindly as I mean."[1]

Elizabeth's last parliament met, (October 27th;) and the queen, although utterly unable for the exertion, insisted on opening it in person, and with unusual pomp; but she fainted under the weight of the royal robes, and would have fallen to the ground, if some gentlemen at hand had not caught her in their arms.[2] The Irish war, and the necessity of a large subsidy to support it, formed the great business for which parliament had assembled; and the queen had determined to avail herself of James's recent offer; to send her a body of Highland auxiliaries from the Isles. Lord Mountjoy, the deputy, was still surrounded by difficulties. He had to hold out, not only against the native Irish, led by O'Neill, but against a force of four thousand Spaniards, who had effected a landing at Kinsale, under Don Juan D'Aguilar. To these dangers threatening England from without, was added the deep discontent of the people at home; who were groaning under that monstrous and oppressive system of monopolies, which had raised the prices of all the necessaries of life to an exorbitant amount. By a monopoly we are to understand a royal patent, which conveyed to some individual the right of exclusively selling any particular commodity; and the power of granting such, the queen claimed, and justly, as a part of her royal prerogative. But she had now carried the practice to a grinding and ruinous extent. The patentee, if he did not exercise the privilege himself, disposed of it to another; and, in either case, all inferior venders, whether in wholesale or retail, were compelled to pay him a high yearly premium, which of course, fell eventually on the consumer. This abuse had gone on increasing since the seventeenth year of the queen's reign; who had found it a convenient way of paying a debt, or satisfying an importunate courtier or creditor, without drawing upon her own privy purse, or risking her popularity by direct taxation.[3] It was to the deep and general discontent occasioned by this, that King James had alluded in his secret instructions to Mar and Kinloss, when he advised them to discover whether the impatience and disgust of the country had increased to such a height that they were unwilling to keep on terms any longer with prince or state; in which case, he observed, it would be a pity not to declare himself openly in their favour, or to suffer them to be overthrown for lack of good backing:[4] a sentence, by the way, which proves that Elizabeth had good ground for her jealousy of the intrigues of the Scottish king with her subjects. But on the arrival of Mar and Kinloss, they soon discovered that the execrations of the people were directed rather against the minister Cecil and the government, than against the queen herself; and when parliament met, and the subject of the Irish war was brought before the Commons, it was soon seen that they knew per-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Royal Letters, Scotland. Endorsed, Copy of her Majesty's letter to the King of Scots, written with her own hand. See, also, her public letter under the Privy Seal, delivered to the ambassadors on their return, MS., British Museum, Titus, C. vii. fol. 124, dated May 11, 1601.

[2] Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, p. 26.

[3] Lingard's History of England, vol. viii. p. 380.

[4] Hailes' Secret Correspondence, pp. 2, 3.

fectly how to make this distinction. The safety of the country and the honour of the queen demanded that they should make every sacrifice to bring the Irish war to a speedy and successful termination; and for this purpose they agreed to one of the largest grants that had been given during this long reign; voting at once four subsidies, and eight tenths and fifteenths, for the expense of the war:[1] but on the odious grievance of monopolies they were firm. Cecil's coach, in going to parliament, had been surrounded by an infuriated mob, which assailed him with curses, and threatened to tear him to pieces. It was time, therefore, to take the alarm; and the queen, who, however obstinate with her ministers, never struggled beyond the proper point with her people, sent for the speaker of the Commons, and declared her resolution to abolish the whole system.[2] This announcement was received with the utmost joy; the queen regained her popularity; and soon after this, the total defeat of Tyrone and his Spanish auxiliaries, the successful termination of the war in Ireland, and the destruction of the Spanish galleys under Spinola, by a combined squadron of the English and Dutch, shed a farewell ray of glory over the last year of her reign. It was now no longer necessary for Elizabeth to court the assistance of James, or to keep in pay the hardy mercenaries of the Scottish Isles: her kingdom was at peace; and resuming her progresses and her gaieties, she struggled to overcome or defy her increasing infirmities; rode to the chase; had country dances in the privy chamber; selected a new favourite, in the young Earl of Clanricarde; and seemed wholly given up to disport, at a time when it was apparent to every one that her hours had been far better spent in retirement from the world, and preparation for that last scene, which the greatest prince, as well as the meanest subject, must act alone.[3]

[1] Hailes' Secret Correspondence, p. 25.
[2] Lingard, vol. viii. pp. 380, 381.
[3] Lord Henry Howard to the Earl of Mar, September 1602, Hailes' Cecil Correspondence, pp. 231, 233.

There had been some expectation in Scotland that the question of the succession was to have been agitated in the late parliament; and the arrival of James's favourite, the Duke of Lennox, at the court of England, at the moment of its being assembled, seems to have excited the suspicions of the queen;[4] but this nobleman, although certainly sent by the King of Scots, chiefly to watch over his interests and confirm those secret friendships with which he was strengthening himself, acted with much prudence, paid his court effectually to the English queen, and lulled all resentment by his frank offer to lead the Scottish auxiliaries against the Spaniards and the Irish. New and alarming reports of the continued preparations of Philip the Third having recently reached the queen, she was particularly gratified by the secret information which James had transmitted her on the subject, and by the readiness with which he had permitted Lennox to volunteer his services. These, however, she declined; declaring that she would never consent to hazard so valuable a life in so perilous an enterprise, and dismissing him with the most flattering marks of her approbation.[5]

During the duke's residence in England, his chief care seems to have been to conciliate that party in the state which was opposed to Cecil, and whom this crafty minister represented as inimical to James. It was led by the Earl of Northumberland, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Lord Cobham. Lord Henry Howard, the agent of Cecil, in his secret correspondence with the King of Scots, laboured to persuade that monarch that this faction were little to be trusted, without weight in the country, and altogether desperate, false, and reckless men. The great object of Cecil and Howard was to exalt their own power and services, and

[4] Lord Henry Howard to the Earl of Mar, Nov. 22, 1601, Hailes' Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, p. 16.
[5] M.S., State-paper Office, copy of the time, Royal Letters, Scotland, Elizabeth to James, December 2, 1601.

to depreciate every other instrument, to whom James might deem himself indebted; and never was there a more revolting picture than that presented by the secret correspondence of these two politicians with their future sovereign. To the king himself, Lord Henry's flattery almost borders upon blasphemy.[1] On all others, except Cecil and his confidants, he pours out an unceasing flood of abuse, slander, bitterness and contempt; and to that great princess whom they had idolized in her palmy days, and whose sun was now sinking in sorrow, there is not given a single sigh of regret, not a solitary glance of sympathy. It has been attempted to defend Cecil from being participant in these intrigues, by asserting that the correspondence is not his, and that he is not responsible for the letters of Lord Henry Howard; but the argument will not bear examination. It is true, indeed, that he neither signed or indited the letters; but he dictated them: he read and approved of them; he dispatched them; he was present when the answers were received; he opened the packet which contained them; and King James, when he replies, either in his own person or through Mr Bruce, his late ambassador, addresses Howard as the mere organ of Cecil. To have written in his own person, or to have given Lord Henry Howard any unlimited commission which should have made Cecil responsible for every sentiment uttered by this prince of flatterers, would have been far too bungling and dangerous an expedient for so profound a politician, so accomplished a lover of mystery and intelligence, as this statesman. But every letter in the correspondence shows that a finer system was adopted, which insured safety to the minister in the event of detection, and yet interfered with none of the advantages of success; by which Howard, although fully instructed beforehand by Cecil, expressed himself as if he acted alone, and at his own risk. It has been said, also, that the real letters of Cecil to James are preserved at Hatfield, amongst the archives of his noble descendant, and contain nothing discreditable to the secretary. But these, probably, were letters of mere ceremony and general good will, which Cecil dispatched by the common opportunities, and cared not who should intercept or read; nay, it is quite possible that, in the intricate spirit of the diplomacy of these times, they were written to be intercepted, and for the purpose of lulling suspicion by the innocence of their contents. At all events, nothing could be more secretly or adroitly managed than the whole correspondence between Howard, Cecil, and the Scottish king. No one had the least suspicion of the secret understanding that existed between the trio. In England, the secretary appeared wholly engrossed with public affairs, and so exclusively devoted to his royal mistress, that many wondered at his indifference to James, whilst he was in truth his sole adviser. When the subject of the succession was openly canvassed; when all were looking to Scotland, and Cecil seemed to stand aloof, and, if the subject were forced upon him, spoke of the King of Scots with a coldness and indifference which blinded the most acute: James, on the other hand, acted his part with admirable dexterity; praised Cecil for his fidelity to his royal mistress; and affected great doubt whether he would eventually turn out his friend or his opponent.

On one point, however, Sir Robert and Lord Henry mistook the character of their royal correspondent. To enhance their own services and destroy their rivals, they insisted on the absolute necessity of the king following out the precise plan which they had sketched out for him, and declining

[1] He is the apple of the Eternal eye; the most "inestimable King James, whom neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, shall separate from the affection and vows they have, next to the sovereign possessor, vowed to him; the redoubted monarch of whose matchless mind Lord Henry thinks, as God's lieutenant on earth, with the same reverence and awe which he owes to God himself when he is on his knees."—Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir Robert Cecil, pp. 154, 168, 170, 194, 233.

all offers of assistance but what came through themselves. Northumberland, Raleigh, Shrewsbury, Cobham, were, according to their representations, utterly unworthy of credit; and were secretly engaged in courses which proved them to be bitterly opposed to his claim. To write to them, or to encourage any persons whatever who were not pointed out by his worthy and faithful Cecil, would, according to Lord Henry's opinion, be the extremity of folly, and might in a moment overthrow all the fair fabric of their hopes. Nay, they had the boldness to proceed farther; and not only attempted to work on the fears and suspicions of the Scottish king, by warning him of his enemies in England, but threw out dark and mysterious hints of treasonable intrigues in his own court, and even presumed to tutor him as to his conduct to his queen. Anne of Denmark, they hinted, was a worthy princess, yet a *woman*, and easily deceived by flatterers, who, for their own ends, were doing all they could to thwart the only measures which could guide him, under the pilotage of his worthy Cecil, to the haven where he would be. James, however, was not to be so cozened. He detected the selfishness of such conduct; called upon them, if they really knew of any plots against his life or his rights, to speak out with the manly openness of truth, and have done with dark innuendoes. Following his own judgment, he treated with contempt their prohibition as to "secret correspondents;" wrote to Northumberland, accepting with warmth and gratitude his offers of service; welcomed with courtesy and good will all who made advances to him; and took care that Lord Henry Howard should know that he considered the language used regarding his queen as a personal insult to himself. The two cunning statesmen, who had outwitted themselves in their desire to monopolize power and destroy their competitors, were astounded; and Lord Henry's apology to his inestimable King James was as abject as his object had been mean and selfish.

James's greatest difficulty was with the Catholics, a powerful party in England; yet regarded by the queen, and the Protestant body of her subjects, with so much suspicion, that it was almost equally dangerous to his hopes to conciliate, or to practise severity. But, happily for this prince, they were at this moment weakened by divisions; and the great question of the "succession," which had been keenly debated amongst the English Catholic exiles abroad, had eventually split them into two parties: the Spanish faction, led by the celebrated Father Persons, the author of the famous Treatise on the Succession, published under the fictitious name of Doleman; and their opponent faction, led by Paget. The first party had espoused the cause of the Infanta. It was to support her claim, as descended from John of Gaunt, son of Edward the Third, that the book on the succession had been written: and as long as this princess continued single, and there was a chance of her marrying the King of Scots, or some English nobleman, it was thought not impossible that the English people might be reconciled to her accession. Her marriage, however, with the Archduke Albert, rendered the prospect desperate; and Persons, her champion, who had now deserted the court of Spain, and removed to Rome, abandoned her cause, and confined his efforts, and those of his party, to the succession of a Catholic prince.[1] Who this should be, he declared, was a matter to him of indifference; but many of his supporters in England looked to Arabella Stewart, the cousin-german of James; and had formed a visionary project for her conversion to Rome, and her marriage with the Cardinal Farnese, also a descendant of John of Gaunt.[2] It was, perhaps, to this wild scheme that the Scottish king alluded, when he lamented that Arabella had been lately moved, by the persuasion of Jesuits, to change her religion:[3]

[1] Lingard's History of England, vol. viii. fourth edition, p. 388. Letter of Father Persons to the Earl of Angus, January 4, 1600.
[2] Ibid. p. 489.
[3] Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir Robert Cecil, p. 118.

but there is no evidence that Persons, who had much influence with his party in England, ever believed it practicable; and the publication of James's "Basilicon Doron," appears to have given a new turn to the ideas of this devoted Catholic, and to have persuaded him, that a prince who could express himself with so much catholicity on some points, would, in time, "suffer himself to be guided to the truth on all." There is a remarkable letter still preserved, in which Persons, writing from Rome, describes his having read some passages of the "Basilicon" to the Pope, who, he says, could scarcely refrain from shedding tears of joy, in hearing them. "May Christ Jesus," exclaimed Persons, "make him a Catholic! for he would be a mirror to all princes of Christendom."[1]

All this rendered the Spanish faction far less bitter than before in their feelings towards the Scottish king; whilst their opponents, the English Catholic exiles, who were led by Paget, having all along contended that Mary queen of Scots was the rightful heir of the English crown, considered, as a matter of course, that her title vested after her death, in her son. To him, therefore, they professed their readiness, on the death of Elizabeth, to transfer their allegiance: from him they looked, in return, for some alleviation of their sufferings, some toleration of their religion. And so keen were their feelings against the Spanish faction, that at the time Persons advocated the cause of the Infanta, he and his supporters met with no more determined enemies than the English Catholic exiles.[2] So far did they carry this hostility, that they entered into a secret correspondence with their own government, and lowered themselves by becoming spies and informers against their brethren.[3]

It was the anxious desire of the King of Scots to conciliate both these parties. One great argument in Persons' "Conference on the Succession," which contended that heresy must be considered an insurmountable ground of exclusion, was evidently directed against him; and had formerly given rise to a mission of Pourie Ogilvy, a Catholic baron, whom he sent, in 1595, into Italy and Spain. At Venice, and at Rome, this envoy, acting, as he asserted, by the secret instructions of the King of Scots, represented his royal master as ready to be instructed in the Catholic faith, and to give a favourable and candid hearing to its expounders. On proceeding into Spain, Ogilvy's flight was bolder, and the promises held out more tempting and decided. The King of Scots, he said, was determined to revenge the injuries and insults offered him by the Queen of England, and eagerly desired the co-operation of Philip. Why then should their majesties not enter into a treaty? His master, for his part, would become Catholic, establish the true faith in his dominions, and send his son, as a hostage for his sincerity, to be educated at the court of Spain. In return, he required from Philip a renunciation of his claims upon the English crown, an advance of 500,000 ducats, and an auxiliary force of 12,000 men. Philip, however, looked with suspicion on the ambassador, who had been observed to haunt with Paget and his friends in the Low Countries. His veracity, his credentials, even his religion, were disputed; and although treated with outward courtesy by the Spanish monarch, he received little encouragement.

But James, who had a strong predilection for these mysterious missions, was not cast down; and returned to the attack. In September 1596, a second envoy, named Drummond, who alleged that he was employed by James, repaired to the papal court, and carried with him a letter from the king to Clement the Eighth, in which he suggested that the residence of a Scottish minister at the court of Rome would have the best effects; and proposed that Drummond,

[1] MS., British Museum, Julius, F. vi. f. 142. Persons to T. M. from Rome.
[2] Lingard's History of England, vol. viii. fourth edition, pp. 390, 391.
[3] Ibid.

bishop of Vaison, a Scotchman by birth, should be selected for that purpose. The ambassador proposed also, in the king's name, that the young Prince Henry, his eldest son, should be brought up in the Catholic faith, and offered to place his castle of Edinburgh in the hands of the Catholics.[1] It is extremely difficult to discover how much, or how little truth there was in these alleged intrigues of the Scottish king. Ogilvy, undoubtedly, acted not only as an envoy of James, but a spy of Cecil; and James, when challenged by Elizabeth's ambassador, Sir Henry Brunker, as to his letter to Clement, declared, in the most pointed and solemn manner, that he never wrote, or transmitted such a document to Rome. The letter, however, was subsequently produced, and published by Cardinal Bellarmine. It undoubtedly bore the king's signature; and, after a rigid inquiry, Lord Balmerino, the Scottish secretary of State, a Catholic, and near relative of the Bishop of Vaison, confessed that he had smuggled in the obnoxious epistle amongst a crowd of other papers; and that the king, believing it to be a matter of form, like the rest, had signed it without glancing at its contents. This story, however, did not itself obtain belief. It was alleged that Balmerino had consented to become the scape-goat, that he might shelter his royal master; and the leniency of his punishment for so daring an act, confirmed the suspicion. But on whatever side the truth may be, this secret intercourse produced a favourable feeling in the great body of the Catholics towards the king of Scots. The impression in his favour was universal amongst all parties in England; and Howard assured the Earl of Mar, in a letter written in the summer of 1602, that all men spoke as freely and certainly of the succession of the King of Scots, as if they were about to take the oath of allegiance to him in his own capital.[2]

[1] Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, pp. 157, 158.

[2] Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir Robert Cecil, p. 127.

It remained only for James to take heed that no storms or commotions at home should disturb this fair weather in England. And here, too, his happy star prevailed; and his efforts to extinguish those dreadful dissensions amongst his nobility, which, for many years, had exposed the country to all the horrors of private war, were at last successful. The Earls of Argyle and Huntly were reconciled, and their friendship cemented by the betrothment of Argyle's daughter to Huntly's son.[3] The Duke of Lennox, and the party of the Scottish queen, were induced to forget their deadly differences with the Earl of Mar; and, last of all, that obstinate and far-ramifying blood-fued between the great houses of Moray and Huntly, which had now, for more than forty years, torn and depopulated some of the fairest portions of the country, was brought to an end by the firm and judicious arbitration of James. This success, and the extraordinary calm with which it was accompanied, occasioned the utmost joy throughout the country; and Nicolson, the English resident, informed Cecil, that nothing was now heard at court but the voice of festivity and gratulation; the nobility feasting each other, consorting like brethren, and all united in one loving bond for the surety and service of the king.[4]

Amid these happy reconcilements, the King of Spain intimated to James his desire to send him an ambassador; and Drummond, bishop of Vaison, solicited permission to visit his native country. The King of France, also, in great secrecy, proposed a new league with Scotland, with the object of strengthening himself against Spain; but as Henry added nothing as to including England, the Scottish king seized the opportunity to convince Elizabeth of his fair dealing. He accordingly dispatched Roger Ashton with a full account of all his foreign negociations; made her participant of his secret intelligence from Spain;

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, February 1, 1602.

[4] Ibid.

communicated the private offers of Henry the Fourth; and expressing his deep gratitude for her steady friendship, requested her advice regarding the answers he should send to France and Spain.[1] The queen, in reply, cautioned him against putting implicit trust in the promises of the French king, whose sincerity she doubted. "Let others promise," said she, "and I will do as much with truth as others with wiles." However, it would do little harm, she observed, to put Henry to the test; and for her part she would make one of any league that was proposed. As to secrecy and taciturnity, he might thoroughly depend upon her; her head might fail, but her tongue never.[2] It was on this proposal of Philip, which came somewhat suspiciously about the same time as the Bishop of Vaison's offered visit, that Elizabeth addressed, in the beginning of January 1602–3, her last confidential letter to James. It was written entirely with her own hand, now so tremulous from age as to make the characters almost illegible; but there was nothing of weakness or irresolution in the sentiments. It is here given entire, dated the 5th January 1603, eleven weeks before her death; which makes it probable that it was amongst the last letters of importance she ever wrote:—

"My very good Brother, — It pleaseth me not a little that my true intents, without glosses or guiles, are by you so gratefully taken; for I am nothing of the vile disposition of such as, while their neighbours' houses is, or likely to be, a-fire, will not only not help, but not afford them water to quench the same. If any such you have heard of towards me, God grant he remember it not too well for them! For the archduke—alas! poor man, he mistaketh everybody like himself, (except his bonds;) which, without his brother's help, he will soon repent.

"I suppose, considering whose apert[3] enemy the King of Spain is, you will not neglect your own honour so much to the world (though you had no particular love to me) as to permit his ambassador in your land, that so causelessly prosecutes such a princess as never harmed him; yea, such a one as (if his deceased father had been rightly informed) did better merit at his hands than any prince on earth ever did to other. For where hath there been an example that any one king hath ever denied so fair a present, as the whole seventeen provinces of the Low Countries? yea, who not only would not have denied them, but sent a dozen gentlemen to warn him of their sliding from him, with offer of keeping them from the near neighbours' hands, and sent treasure to stay the shaking towns from lapse.—Deserved I such a recompense as many a complot both for my life and kingdom? Ought not I to defend and bereave him of such weapons as might invade myself? He will say, I help Holland and Zealand from his hands. No. If either his father or himself would observe such oath, as the Emperor Charles obliged himself, and so in sequel his son,—I would not [have] dealt with others' territories; but they hold these by such covenants, as not observing, by their own grants they are no longer bound unto them. But though all this were not unknown to me, yet I cast such right reasons over my shoulder, and regarded their good, and have never defended them in a wicked quarrel; and, had he not mixed that government, contrary to his own law, with the rule of Spaniards, all this had not needed.

"Now for the warning the French gave you of Veson's embassage. To you, methinks, the king (your good brother) hath given you a *caveat*, that being a king he supposes by that measure you would deny such offers. And since you will have my counsel, I can hardly believe that (being warned) your own subject shall be suffered to come into your realm, from such a place to such intent. Such a prelate (if he came) should be taught a better lesson than play so presump-

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Royal Letters, Scotland, Elizabeth to James, July 4, 1602.

[2] Elizabeth to James, Royal Letters, State-paper Office, July 4, 1602.

[3] Apert; open.

tuous and bold a part, afore he know your good liking thereof, which I hope is far from your intent: so will his coming verify to much good Mr Symple's asseverations at Rome, of which you have or [ere] now been warned enough.

"Thus you see how to fulfil your trust reposed in me, which to infringe I never mind. I have sincerely made patent my sincerity; and though not fraught with much wisdom, yet stuffed with great good will. I hope you will bear with my molesting you too long with my *scrattinge* hand, as proceeding from a heart that shall be ever filled with the sure affection of

"Your loving and friendly sister."[1]

Nothing, certainly, could be more friendly than this advice; and James, who was convinced that everything was now prepared for his pacific succession, and that he had no longer anything to dread, either from aspirants abroad or intrigue and conspiracy at home, waited quietly for the event which should put him in possession of his hopes. Nor had he long to wait. Only ten days after her last letter, Elizabeth caught a severe cold at Whitehall; and as she had been warned by Dr Dee, her astrologer, to beware of that palace, she exposed herself to a removal to Richmond in stormy weather, and after a slight amendment became worse. Up to this time she had struggled sternly and strongly against every symptom of increasing weakness. It had long been evident to all about her, that, since the death of Essex, her mind and constitution had been perceptibly shattered. Her temper was entirely broken; and, in spite of every effort to defy it, a deep melancholy, and weariness of life, had fixed upon her. But although this was apparent to near observers,[2] to the world she kept up appearances; and continued her usual fêtes and diversions, interrupted by sudden fits of silence, abstraction, and tears.[3] At last the effort was too much; the bow, bent to its utmost endurance, snapt asunder; and her lion heart, and strong energetic frame, sunk at once into a state of the most pitiable and helpless weakness. Every effort to rouse her was ineffectual. She would take neither medicines nor nourishment; her sleep entirely forsook her, and a low hectic fever seemed to be wasting her by inches; whilst she complained of a heavy load upon the heart, which made her sigh almost incessantly, and seek, in vain, for relief in a restless change of position. These sad symptoms increased to such a degree in the beginning of March, that the physicians pronounced her case hopeless; and it was deemed right to send for the council, who arrived at Richmond on the 18th of March; and anticipating her speedy dissolution, took such measures as were thought necessary, in that event, to secure the public tranquillity. With this object, it was resolved, that the lord high-admiral, Howard earl of Nottingham, the only member of the council whose presence seemed to give comfort to the dying queen, Cecil, the secretary of state, and the lord keeper, should remain at Richmond; whilst the rest of the council repaired to Whitehall. Orders, at the same time, were issued to set a guard upon the Exchequer; to arrest and transport to Holland all suspicious characters found lurking in London and Westminster; to furnish the court with means of defence; and convey to the Tower some gentlemen who were believed to be desperate from discontent, and anxious for innovation. Most of these whose hands it was thus thought wise to manacle, before they could use them in any sudden mischief, were partisans of Essex; and it is remarkable, that in this number we find Baynham, Catesby, and Tresham, afterwards involved in the Gunpowder Treason.

Whilst these precautions were being taken, the melancholy object of them, the queen, seemed retired and sunk

[1] MS. Letters, State-paper Office, Royal Letters, Scotland. Endorsed, January 5, copy of Her Majesty's letter to the King of Scots, written with her own hand. It is now printed for the first time.

[2] Letter of Sir John Harrington, quoted in Dr Lingard's History, vol. viii. p. 394.

[3] Birch's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 565. Harrington's Nugæ Antiquæ, pp. 317, 318.

within herself; took no interest in anything that was going on; and if roused for a moment, declared that she felt no pain, required no remedies, and was anxious for death. She expressed, however, a strong desire to hear prayers in her private chapel, and all was made ready; but she found the effort too much for her, and had cushions spread at the door of the privy chamber, where she lay and heard service. Want of food and sleep appear, not long after, to have brought on a partial delirium; for she now obstinately insisted on sitting up, dressed day and night, upon her cushions; and when entreated by the lord admiral to go to bed, assured him, with a shudder of terror, that if he had seen what she saw there, he would choose any place but that. She then motioned him to approach her; and ordering the rest to leave the room, drew him with a piteous gesture down to her low seat, and exclaimed, "My lord, they have bound me: I am tied with an iron collar about my neck."[1] It was in vain he attempted either argument or consolation: no power would make her undress or go to bed; and in this miserable state she sat for two days and three nights, her finger pressed upon her lips, as if afraid of betraying some secret; her eyes open and fixed on the ground, and generally silent and immoveable.[2] Yet, when Cecil her secretary remonstrated against this, and asked if she had seen spirits, she smiled contemptuously, and said the question was not worthy an answer; but when he told her she must go to bed, if it were but to satisfy her people, she showed a flash of her former spirit. "Must!" said she; "is must a word to be addressed to princes? Ah, little man, little man! thy father, had he been alive, durst not have used that word; but thou art presumptuous, because thou knowest I shall die." To the same minister she repeatedly declared that she was not mad, and that he must not think to make Queen Joan of her: alluding, perhaps, to Joanna the deranged Queen of Naples.[3]

It was now thought right to summon the ministers of religion; upon which the aged Whitgift, archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of London her almoner, immediately repaired to Richmond; and being admitted to her sick chamber, appeared to give her comfort by their ministrations and prayers. They attempted to induce her to take some nourishment, and to follow the prescriptions of her physicians; but this she steadily refused, declaring that she had no wish to live. They then exhorted her to provide for her spiritual safety: to which she mildly answered, "That I have done long ago."[4] When the archbishop, who was affected by the deep despondency and melancholy into which she had sunk, attempted to rouse and comfort her by alluding to the services she had conferred on Europe, and by her glorious defence of the Protestant faith, she checked him severely, declaring that she had too long listened to the voice of flattery, and that it should at least be silent on her death-bed; but she held him by the hand, and compelled him to continue his prayers, till the aged primate's knees were wearied, and he had almost sunk down at her bedside. At last she permitted him to depart, after receiving his blessing. In these devotions she did not join audibly, for her speech had almost entirely left her for two days before her death; but it was apparent to those around her that she was perfectly sensible; and they had the comfort of seeing her lift her eyes to heaven, and join her trembling emaciated hands in the attitude of prayer.[5]

To the latest moment of her life she seemed willing to keep up the mystery as to her successor, and

[1] Lingard, vol. viii. p. 397. Camden's Elizabeth, in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 653. Carey's Memoirs, p. 117.

[2] Turner's History of Elizabeth, pp. 700, 701. Birch's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 507.

[3] MS. of Lady Southwell, quoted by Dr Lingard, vol. viii. p. 397.

[4] Sloan MSS., printed by Ellis, second series, vol. iii. p. 194.

[5] Carey's Memoirs, pp. 120, 122. It is remarkable that no proposal to receive the blessed communion was made by the dying queen or the bishops.

either evaded the question, or replied so obscurely, that it was difficult to divine her wishes. On the night, however, on which she died, Cecil made a last effort for the King of Scots; and accompanied by the Lord-admiral Howard, and the lord keeper, earnestly requested her to name a successor. Her answer was proud and brief: "My seat has been the seat of kings, and none but a king must succeed me." They urged her to be more explicit, and mentioned the King of France; but she was silent. They then ventured on the King of Scots; but she vouchsafed no sign. The Lord Beauchamp, the heir of the house of Suffolk by his mother Lady Catherine Grey, was then spoken of; upon which she roused herself and said, with a look and flash of her former lion spirit, "I will have no rascal's son in my seat." [1] Here, according to the account of Lady Southwell, one of her maids of honour, who stood at the moment beside the bed, the important interview ended; and the queen never again spoke. But on the other hand, it was positively affirmed by Cecil, and the two lords his companions, that at a later hour of the same night she clearly declared by signs that the King of Scots alone ought to succeed her. When his name was mentioned, it is said she suddenly started, heaved herself up in the bed, and held her hands jointly over her head in manner of a crown. It is probable that this sign, given by the dying princess, was one of assent; yet, it is possible, also, that they who had seized the awful moment when her soul was hovering between the two worlds to torture her with questions, may have mistaken a movement of agony for one of approbation.[2]

Soon after this she sunk into a state of insensibility, and about midnight fell into a placid sleep, from which she woke to expire gently and without a struggle. Cecil and the lords at Richmond, instantly posted to London; at six in the morning the council assembled; and on that same morning, before ten o'clock, King James the Sixth was proclaimed heir and successor to Elizabeth, both by proximity of blood, and, as it was now positively added, by her own appointment upon her death-bed. Sir Robert Carey, Lord Hunsdon's youngest son, a near relative and favourite of the queen, was at Richmond during her few last miserable days of suffering; and Lady Scrope, his sister, one of her ladies, watched her royal mistress at the moment of her death. Both were friends and correspondents of the King of Scots, and it had been concerted between the brother and sister that the distinction of being the first to announce the happy news to that monarch should be theirs. It was difficult, however, to cheat the vigilancy of Cecil and the council, who had ordered all the gates of the palace to be closed; but Carey was on the alert, ready booted and spurred; his sister stood beside the bed, watching for her mistress' last sigh; and the moment it was breathed, she snatched a ring from her finger, (it had been a gift from the King of Scots,) glided out of the chamber, and cast it over the palace window to her brother, who threw himself on horseback, and rode post into Scotland. The queen had died at three o'clock on Thursday morning, and Carey reached the palace of Holyrood on Saturday night, after the royal expectant had retired to bed. He was immediately admitted; and throwing himself on his knees, saluted James as monarch of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland. The king asked for the token; and Carey, drawing the ring from his bosom, presented it in his sister's name. James then gave him his hand to kiss; and without evincing any unseemly exultation, bade the messenger good night, and composed himself to rest. Next morning, and for the two succeeding days, the news was not made public, as Carey's message was not official; but on the third day, Sir Charles Percy, brother to the Earl of Northumberland, and Thomas Somerset, son of Lord Wor-

[1] MS. by Lady Southwell, Lingard, vol. viii. p. 397.

[2] Sloan MSS., printed by Ellis, second series, vol. iii. p. 194.

cester, arrived with a letter from the privy council of England, announcing the death of the queen, the proclamation of James's accession to the throne, and the universal joy and impatience with which the people of England expected their new monarch. It assured him that their sorrow for their recent loss was extinguished by looking forward to the heroical virtues which resided in his person, laid at his feet the humble offering of their faith and obedience, and besought him, in his excellent wisdom, to visit them with all speed, that he might take possession of his inheritance, and inspire new life into its languishing body.[1]

This great event was now communicated to the people, who received it at first with universal demonstrations of exultation and delight; and the king declared his determination to set out speedily for his new kingdom, leaving the queen and his children to follow at a slower pace. He committed the government of Scotland to the privy-council; intrusted his eldest son, Henry, now Prince of Wales, to the Earl of Mar; Prince Charles to Sir Alexander Seton president of the Session; and the Princess Elizabeth to the Earl of Linlithgow. On the succeeding Sunday, James attended service in the High Church of St. Giles, where a sermon was preached, in which the minister enumerated the many mercies poured out upon their prince; and described, as none of the least, his peaceable accession to that mighty kingdom which now awaited him. The monarch himself then rose and delivered a valedictory address to the congregation, which, we are told, was often interrupted by the tears of the people. James, who was himself moved by these expressions of regret and affection, entreated his subjects not to be too deeply troubled at his departure; assured them that they should find the fruits of his government as well afar off as when he had resided amongst them; pleaded that his increase in greatness did in nowise diminish his love; and promised them a personal visit once every three years; when the meanest as well as the greatest, should have access to his person, and permission to pour their complaints into his bosom.[2]

This farewell oration was delivered on the 3d of April 1603. On the 5th of the same month the king, surrounded by a large and brilliant cavalcade, composed not only of Scottish but of English noblemen and gentlemen, who had hurried to his court with the proffers of their homage, took his departure from Edinburgh amid the lamentations of the citizens. His progress through England, which occupied a month, was one long and brilliant pageant. Triumphs, speeches, masques, huntings, revels, gifts, all that wealth could command, and flattery and fancy devise, awaited him at the different cities and castles which he visited; and on the 6th of May, 1603, he entered London, accompanied by a numerous concourse of his nobility and councillors, guarded and ushered by the Lord Mayor and five hundred citizens on horseback, and welcomed by the deafening shouts of an immense multitude of his new subjects. It seemed as if the English people had in this brief period utterly forgotten the mighty princess, whose reign had been so glorious, and over whose bier they had so lately sorrowed. Not a murmur was heard, not one dissenting voice was raised to break the unanimity of his welcome; and thus, after so many centuries of war and disaster, the proud sceptre of the Tudors was transferred to the house of Stewart, with a tranquillity and universal contentment, which, even considering the justice of the title, was remarkable and unexpected.

In this memorable consummation, it was perhaps not unallowable, certainly it was not unnatural, that the lesser kingdom, which now gave a monarch to the greater, should feel some emotions of national pride; for Scotland had defended her liberty against innumerable assaults; had been reduced, in the long struggle, to the very verge of despair; had been betrayed by

[1] Spottiswood, pp. 473, 474.

[2] Calderwood, p. 472. Spottiswood, p. 476.

more than one of her kings, and by multitudes of her nobles; had been weakened by internal faction, distracted by fanatic rage; but had never been overcome, because never deserted by a brave, though rude and simple people. Looking back to her still remoter annals, it could be said, with perfect historical truth, that this small kingdom had successfully resisted the Roman arms, and the terrible invasions of the Danish sea kings; had maintained her freedom, within her mountains, during the ages of the Saxon Heptarchy, and stemmed the tide of Norman conquest; had shaken off the chains attempted to be fixed upon her by the two great Plantagenets, the First and Third Edwards, and, at a later period, by the tyranny of the Tudors; and if now destined, in the legitimate course of royal succession, to lose her station as a separate and independent kingdom, she yielded neither to hostile force nor to fraud, but willingly consented to link her future destinies with those of her mighty neighbour: like a bride, who, in the dawning prospect of a happy union, is contented to resign, but not to forget, the house and name of her fathers. Yet, however pleased at this pacific termination of their long struggles, the feelings with which his ancient people beheld the departure of their prince were of a melancholy nature; and an event occurred on the same day on which he set out, that made a deep impression upon a nation naturally thoughtful and superstitious.

As the monarch passed the house of Seton, near Musselburgh, he was met by the funeral of Lord Seton, a nobleman of high rank; which, with its solemn movement and sable trappings, occupied the road, and contrasted strangely and gloomily with the brilliant pageantry of the royal cavalcade. The Setons were one of the oldest and proudest families of Scotland; and that lord whose mortal remains now passed by had been a faithful adherent of the king's mother, whose banner he had never deserted, and in whose cause he had suffered exile and proscription. The meeting was thought ominous by the people. It appeared, to their excited imaginations, as if the moment had arrived when the aristocracy of Scotland was about to merge in that of Great Britain; as if the Scottish nobles had finished their career of national glory, and this last representative of their race had been arrested on his road to the grave, to bid farewell to the last of Scotland's kings. As the mourners moved slowly onward, the monarch himself participating in these melancholy feelings, sat down by the way-side, on a stone still pointed out to the historical pilgrim; nor did he resume his progress till the gloomy procession had completely disappeared.[1]

It is with feelings of gratitude, mingled with regret, that the Author now closes this work—the history of his country—the labour of little less than eighteen years: gratitude to the Giver of all Good, that life and health have been spared to complete, however imperfectly, an arduous undertaking; regret that the tranquil pleasures of historical investigation, the happy hours devoted to the pursuit of truth, are at an end, and that he must at last bid farewell to an old and dear companion.

1 History of the House of Seyton, Bannatyne Club edition, p. 60. History of Scotland, by Sir Walter Scott, vol. ii. p. 426.

LONDON, 26*th October*, 1843.

PROOFS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

FROM

MANUSCRIPTS, CHIEFLY IN HER MAJESTY'S STATE-PAPER OFFICE, HITHERTO UNPRINTED.

No. I., page 15.

Attack on Stirling, April 26, 1578.

A MINUTE and interesting account of the successful attack on Stirling castle, which led to the restoration of Morton to the supreme power in the government, will be found in the following letter from Sir Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley:—

BOWES TO BURGHLEY.[1]

"*Edinburgh, April* 28, 1578.

"May it please your lordship,—On Saturday last, about six in the morning, the Earl of Mar, accompanied with the Abbots of Dryburgh and Cambuskenneth, and their servants, ordinarily lodged in the castle of Stirling, came to the castle gate, with pretence to go a-hunting; and finding there the Master and his servants, the abbots called the Master aside, charging him that he had much abused the Earl of Mar, his nephew, and far overseen himself in withholding the custody of the king and castle from the earl. The Master, after reasonable excuse made, found that they pressed to possess the keys, and command the piece; and reaching himself to an halbert, his servants came to assist him. Dryburgh and some with him stayed the Master; Cambuskenneth and his complices assaulted the rest; when Buchanan, one of the Master's men, was sore hurt. After the fray pacified, the Master and the abbots withdraw themselves to the hall to debate the matter; and Argyle being then a-bed, rose speedily, and came with a small number to the hall, where, hearing that the Master and the abbots were in quiet communication, he retired himself to his chamber, and, arming himself, he assembled his servants, that with the Master were able to have overmatched the other. But the Master being then fully satisfied, Argyle was likewise soon after appeased; and then yielding possession for the earl, they agreed at length to remove thence, and draw to concord, specially to satisfy the king, who of the tumult, as is reported, was in great fear, and teared his hair, saying the Master was slain. And as I am informed his grace by night hath been by this means so discouraged, as in his sleep he is herewith greatly disquieted. After all this was ended, the Earls of Argyle and Mar, the two abbots and Mr Buchanan,[2] advertised by their letters this council of this accident; declaring that the parties were well reconciled; and persuaded the council to proceed forwards in the course determined for the government, as no such matter had happened. Argyle departed out of the castle, and he is now gone to levy his forces, meaning to return within two days at the farthest.

"In this uproar, the eldest son of the Master was so crushed in the throng, as he died the next day. The Master is fallen into vehement disease with danger of his life.

"Upon the coming of the said letters from Stirling, on Saturday about nine in the afternoon, the council assembled; and after some hot humours digested, they despatched Montrose that night

[1] Orig., British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 89.

[2] This was the celebrated Buchanan.

towards Stirling, to understand, and certify to them the true state of the matter, to persuade quietness about the king's person, and to continue this present government established until the next parliament.

"Montrose, after long abode at the Lord of Livingston's house, came to Stirling in the next day, and was received into the castle. He putteth the council in good hope that the matter is well pacified, and that this government shall not by this accident be impeached. Whereupon the most part of this council, pretending to have the king's letters commanding their repair to him, are departed this day towards Stirling; but what shall ensue hereof is greatly doubted.

"Lochleven being speedily advertised of the doings of the abbots, came the same day to Stirling, and with some difficulty (as outwardly was shewed) was let into the castle with one servant, whom presently he returned to Lochleven to the Earl of Morton, and himself remaineth still in the castle. The Earl of Morton, upon the first advertisement, came to Lochleven; despatched his servant to the Earl of Angus, to put all his friends and forces in a readiness on an hour's warning. And many noblemen, being friends to these two earls, have done the like; nevertheless they shew no force nor assembly as yet.

"The Lords of the Council have likewise levied all their powers, drawing some part with all possible speed towards Stirling, and leaving the residue in readiness upon warning.

"Some are of opinion that the council will be readily received and welcomed to the king, and to all the castle, without further change; and many think that, by the means of the abbots, the king shall cause them to retire to their own houses, till his pleasure be further known; and in case they disobey the same, then to lay siege and take the castle. That then the king will cause the Earl of Morton and other nobles to levy their power within the realm, to raise the siege, and rescue his person from their violence. What storm shall fall out of these swelling heats doth not yet appear. But I think, verily, and that within two or three days, that it will burst into some open matter, discovering sufficiently the purposes intended; wherein, to my power, I shall seek to quench all violent rages, and persuade unity and concord among them; which, if this sudden chance had not happened, might easily have taken place. Thus referring the rest to the next occasion,

"And with humble duty, &c.,

"ROBERT BOWES."

No. II., page 17.

Composition between Morton and his Enemies.

Lord Hunsdon's letter from Berwick to Lord Burghley, referred to in the text, and preserved in the British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 101, gives some interesting particulars of the composition between Morton and his powerful opponents. It is as follows:—

HUNSDON TO BURGHLEY.

"*Berwick, August* 19, 1578.

"My very good Lord,—I will not trouble your lordship with any long discourse touching this matter in Scotland."

Hunsdon then refers Burghley to Mr Bowes's letter, "who," he says, "has the greatest merit in bringing about peace: otherwise there had been such a slaughter as would not have been appeased in Scotland these many years,—the malice of the lords and their adherents, especially the wardens of Tevydale and the Merse, and their bands, which was their greatest force against Morton, was so great and so desirous of revenge. They of the Merse made them a standard of blue sarcenet, and in it a child painted within a grate, with this speech out of his mouth, 'Liberty I crave, and cannot it have.' They seemed to answer under it, 'Either you shall have it, or we will die for it;' so as, though their malice to Morton was their quarrel indeed, yet they made the detaining of the king their colour.

"My Lord, the queen's maj: hath now both sides at her devotion, and the party of Athole and Argyle more in show than the king's; for the king's side terms the others Englishmen, because they were contented to put the whole of their causes to her majesty; which the other lords, being required of Mr Bowes to do the like, Morton utterly refused the same, saying that the K. and his council would end them. But if Mr Bowes's travel, and some other means, had not taken place, it was very like that Morton had been hard bested; for although the king's side were some-

thing more in number, yet were the others better chosen men, far better horsed and armed, and besides, few of them but, either for their own causes or their friends, bare Morton a deadly hatred and sour desire of revenge, which was but in few of the king's side against any of the other lords. I pray God her majesty do so deal now, having both sides at her devotion, as she may keep them both; which surely she may easily do if she will.

"The king hath sent her majesty a cast of Falcons. I would be glad that her majesty would remember him with some token.

"Thus have I troubled, &c., &c., &c.

"F. HUNSDON."

No. III., page 21.

Destruction of the House of Hamilton by Morton in 1579.

The following letter of Captain Nicholas Arrington to Lord Burghley describes his negotiations with the young king, and the deep feeling of hatred and revenge which animated so many of the nobility against the house of Hamilton. It is preserved in the British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 130:—

NICHOLAS ARRINGTON TO BURGHLEY.

"*Berwick, 10th October* 1579.

"Right Honourable,—Having given my attendance, as well at Stirling as at Edinburgh, these twenty-six days, for answer of the king to such letters and instructions as I had to deliver and deal in from the queen's highness my sovereign with the king there; and having used my duty and diligence there to my simple knowledge, as well to the king himself as to the whole board and nobility, . . I have now received the king's letters in answer, which I send herewith to your honour, as also a letter to her highness from the Earl of Morton, &c. Yet, in using such conference with his grace, as her majesty's letters and instructions did lead me unto, touching the Hamiltons, I could not find in the king other than fervent hatred against them, and as it were a fear he had of them, if they should remain or inhabit within that realm, to be dangerous to his person. I found the like devotion of the whole nobility there towards them, and not willing to pity their cause; and thought not only discourtesy in receiving them in England, but as much in soliciting their causes, being so odious murderers to the king's dearest friends; yet seeming to be grateful of her majesty's good [will] in forewarning the danger that might happen to the king's estate by their banishment into foreign countries, being of so great a house and quality. . . Touching the present state of that country, the king hath not been directly moved by the council, or any number of councillors or noblemen together, for any marriage with any particular person. Yet it is thought that, as there be several factions in that matter, so every one of them seeketh to persuade the K. to marry in that place that may be best for their own purpose; wherein some look for France, some for Spain, some for Denmark; and it is said the matter will be offered to the queen shortly, with request to dispose himself such way as shall be found most convenient for his marriage; and it seems that the K., of his own inclination, best liketh and affecteth to match with England in marriage, in case he may find her majesty favourable to him.

"Touching Monsieur de Aubigny, it appeareth that the king is much delighted with his company, and he is like to win to special favour; and not only to be Earl of Lennox in reversion, (after the earl present,) but also to have some part of the Hamiltons' lands, if he may be drawn to religion. He hath not, as yet, dealt in any matter of marriage with the king, nor in any matter of great weight, but defers all those things to further time. He means to abide in Scotland this winter. His wife is looked for there, with her younger brother Andracks. He lives in court more than his living will bear, as is thought; whereupon some judges he is borne with some greater than himself. He hath many followers, as Mr Henry Kerr and others, that are much suspected; which they perceive, causing them to be more wary to meddle in anything as yet.

"This parliament holds at Edinburgh the 20th of this month, which is thought chiefly for these causes: for the forfeiture of the Hamiltons and Sir James Balfour; for the confirmation of all things done in the regents' times during the king's minority; and for order to be done in the king's house and revenues. The heartburn and hatred betwixt the Earl of Morton and the Kerrs and the Humes, who depend upon Ar-

gyle, Montrose, and that fellowship, still continueth.

"The king is generally well loved and obeyed of both sides, and of all the people. Thus craving pardon for my evil scribbling, using more another weapon than the pen, I do commit your honour to the preservation of the Almighty.

"NICHOLAS ARRINGTON."

No. IV., page 21.

Poisoning of the Earl of Athole, and State of Parties in Scotland.

The two following letters, which are printed from the originals in the Bowes Papers, relate to the state of the country immediately after the death of the Earl of Athole:—

LETTER FROM AN ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENT TO SIR GEORGE BOWES. Dated 29th April 1579.[1]

"The Spirit of the Lord Jesus be with you for salutation.

"I wrote to you before, the day and date of the Earl of Athole deid,[2] quhilk[3] was the 24th of this instant April.

"He was opened and bowelled on Sunday, and it is plainly said he was poisoned, for so they perceive when he was opened. The Earl of Montrose and the Bailie of Arrol is left chief councillors to the Earl of Athole's son, quhilk is eighteen years old.

"His father has given him in command to keep friendship with all them that he was in friendship withal before.

"There is great strife and debate quhilk should be chancellor; but the Earl of Argyle has gotten the grant of it at the king.

"Morton is at Castle Semple with Boyd, and has ane enterprise upon the Hamiltons, at least seems so; but all is falsett[4] he means.

"To this effect, Captain Crawford is to take up ane hundred men, and Captain Hume ane other hundred; but I think my Lord of Athole's deid shall make them run a new course.

"Ye shall surely know that Athole's fellowship will not leave the common cause; and, therefore, I think ye shall hear of some alteration shortly.

"Our name and the Kerrs is lying at wait what shall be enterprised. I wrote to you before we shall never be Morton's.

"It is thought that Argyle shall take Athole's place plain upon him, and begin where he left; and Montrose will be a spur to the same.

"We are surely informed that the King of Denmark has levied six thousand men to come on Orkney and Shetland: by whose means this is done I wrote to you before in my last letter.

"The Earl of Angus remains at Tantallon.

"The court is very quiet at this time. I pray God preserve our king, for he is in great hazard: for if they begin the Italian fashion in the king's house, what good shall we look for as long as he is there? Surely, I fear me, if he be not gotten out of their hands, they will the like with him. As I hear farther, you shall be advertised.

"Written the 29th April 1579.

"Your loving friend,

"4°."

LETTER OF INTELLIGENCE FROM AN ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENT TO SIR GEORGE BOWES.

"Sir,—Albeit the time hath been short since your departure, the accidents and mutations in this realm hath not been of small importance. As I wrote to you of before, that the Earl of Athole his sickness was thought to be mortal, so is he now departed this present life, at Kincardine, the 25th of April, not without great suspicion, and a crying out that he was poisoned. And yet I think, with time, that bruit will vanish, notwithstanding that the Lord of Aratully,[5] whose name is Stewart, was, by the Earl of Montrose, and the remanent friends that was present when the corpse was opened, sent to the king's majesty, humbly requiring for trial and punishment. To whom his majesty answered,—Gif[6] that matter were true, it concerned himself for divers respects; and yet, as it were a shame to him to leave the matter untried, and gif need required unpunished,—so were it ane sin to slander any innocent personage: and therefore he would not fail, first to take trial, and thereafter to proceed to punishment.

"The hail[7] friends of the dead are convened at Dunkelden on the 3d of May, where the young Earls of Athole and Montrose put in deliberation what

1 From the Bowes MSS., orig.
2 Death.
3 Quhilk—which, or who.
4 Falsett, falsehood.
5 Grandtully
6 If.
7 Whole.

were best way to come by ane revenge of this heinous fact.

"It hath been concluded with that assembly, that not only those which were present should crave justice of this matter at the king's majesty, but also all the sociats of the Falkirk should be convened to crave the same. Upon this conclusion, a convention of the foresaids is appointed to be at Edinburgh upon the 15th May; but I am of opinion that this their appointed diet shall not hold, in respect of the causes subsequent.

"Upon the 1st May, a matter, before concluded, was put in execution. Letters was directed by the king and council to charge the Lords of Arbroath and Paisley to exhibit their brother, the Earl of Arran, before the king in Stirling, upon the 20th of the said month; which letters was only devised to put the said lords in hope that no further shall proceed against them but by the order aforesaid.

"The Earl of Morton before that time was sent to Dalkeith, the Earl of Angus to Douglas, the Earl of Lennox to Glasgow, the Lord Ruthven to Stirling; all these persons having their forces privately warned upon the 3d of May, marched towards Hamilton and Draffnage, where they made their rendezvous before their setting forward. The twae brether[1] was fled away, and left the house garnished; which are now enclosed, and ready to be given up.

"Immediately after the said lords was upon the fields to press towards Hamilton, when they were certain that no intelligence could prevent their doings, proclamation was sent forth by the king and council, at an hour proclaimed in divers sheriffdoms, to follow the same lords for prosecuting and apprehending of the two foresaid brethren and their complices.

"This sudden and unexpected dealing and proceeding is like to put such affray in the minds of the associates at Falkirk, that their appointed diet for meeting at Edinburgh shall turn to great uncertainty.

"Besides this, the Lord Seton is charged to appear personally at Stirling, upon the 6th day hereof, to answer *super inquirendis;* where he is, for divers respects, to be committed to ward.

"John Seton, second son to the said lord, arrived in this country upon the 2d of May. He is created *Cavallero de Buca* of the Catholic King of Spain. But I believe this commission shall be of the less efficacy, that his father is now by chance happened in the midst of these troubles. . . . By fame nobody is charged with this heinous fact of poison but the Lady Mar, and her brother the comptroller, quhilk[2] is thought shall be after trial evanished; because divers does believe, that this bruit hath rather proceeded upon malice to found ane quarrel upon, nor upon any sure ground. Ye may, by yourself, consider that all these matters tend to this fine,[3] to bring the king to Edinburgh out of fear. . . . The rulers of his affairs and person are looked for to be these: the Earls Morton, Buchan, Argyle, gif[4] he will leave the associates, and Montrose in like manner, and the Lord Ruthven. It is thought that *ω*, at the king's desire, shall be[5] accept upon him the office of chancellor; and failing of that, it is in question betwixt Argyle and Buchan, of thir twae[6] whay shall be thought meetest by the king and council.

"I write only unto you *nudam et veram historiam*, leaving to your own judgment to discourse what shall follow; whilk is able enough to do, in respect that all the affairs of this country is better to you known nor by writing can be explained.

"I have had large conference with *ω*,[7] which I cannot at this time commit to writing. It appeareth that he is in part offended with some proceedings, but yet easily mitigate, gif the great word to you known shall be spoken.

"The Flemish painter is in Stirling, in working of the king's portraiture, but expelled forth of the place at the beginning of thir troubles. I am presently travelling to obtain him licence to see the king's presence thrice in the day, till the end of his work; quhilk will be no sooner perfected nor nine days, after the obtaining of this licence."

[1] The two brothers.

No. V., page 30.

James's Letter to Mary.

In the State-paper Office there is an original letter of the young king, written at this time to his mother, the cap-

[2] Quhilk, which. [3] Fine, end.

[4] Gif, if.

[5] So in the original. The writer had meant to score out *be*, but forgot.

[6] Thir twae, these two.

[7] Morton is here meant, I think. What the "*great word*" was which the writer thinks would operate like a talisman on this proud and able peer, is not easily discovered.

tive queen. Mary had sent him a ring; and the little ape which appears in the postscript, whose fidelity he so much commends, was perhaps also a present from her.

The letter of James is as follows:—

JAMES VI. TO MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.[1]

"Je vous supplie tres humblement de croire que ce n'a poinct este de ma bonne vollontè que vostre seqretaire s'en soit retorne sens quil m'aye donne vostre lettre, et faict entendre ce que luy avies commende de me dire ayent treu beaucoup de regret de ce qui sen est passè, car je seroìs infiniment fache que long crust que je ne vous voulu se porter l'honneur et le devoir que je vous doibs, ayant esperense que avecque le temps Dieu me fera grace de vous faire prendre de ma bonne et affectionnè amytée, sachent asses qu'apres luy tout l'honneur qu'ay en ce monde, je le tiens de vous.

"Je resceu la bague quil vous a pleu m'envoyer laquelle je garderay bien pour l'honneur de vous. Et vous en envoye une aultre, que je vous supplie treshumblement de vouloir resevoir daussy bon cueur comme je resceue la vostre. Vous m'aves bien faict paroistre par les avertisemens quil vous a pleu me faire par vos dernieres lettres, combien vous metes bonne mere. Vous supplient treshumblement que sy en endendes davantage de men advertir pour y mettre ordre le mieulx quil me sera possible, aquoy je desja commense ainsi quentendres par le Compte de Lenox, vous supplient de m'y estre aydente et de me donner vostre bon conseil et advis lequel je veulx ensuyire a celle. De vous rendre plus certaine quen toute chose on il vous plaira de me commender vous me trouverez toujours vostre tres obeissant filz. Vous baisent tres humblement les mains prient Dieu, &c.

"Vostre obeisant Filz a jamais,

"JACQUES R.[2]

"Madame, je vous recommende la Fidelitè de mon petit singe qui ne bouge daupres de moy, par lequel me manderes souvent de noz nouvelles.

"A la Royne d'Escosse,

"Ma tres Honores Dame."

1 January 29, 1580-1.

2 This signature and the postscript are written in the young king's own hand.

No. VI., page 31.

Letters on the Troubles, Trial, and Death of the Regent Morton.

The following interesting letters, relative to the troubles, trial, and death of the Regent Morton, are taken from the originals, preserved in the Harleian Collection in the British Museum. The volume of the Harleian is No. 6999, to which my attention was drawn by the Rev. Joseph Stevenson:—

SIR R. BOWES TO LORD BURGHLEY AND SIR FRANCIS WALSINGHAM. January 7, 1580-1.

"It may please your good Lordship and your Honour. Yesterday Mr Archibald Douglas came out of Tyvedale hither, openly to Berwick, to seek her majesty's relief to the Earl of Morton in his present distress, and her highness's succour to himself. . .

"He had offered himself for trial, if they would give him a fair trial, and exempt him from the torture which was threatened; but finding his house seized, and his goods and papers seized, he had fled to Berwick. . . .

"My servant, lately addressed into Scotland to learn the certainty of these new accidents, returned yesternight, giving me to understand, that on Saturday the last of December, as before hath been signified, Captain James Stewart, with the privity and especial commandment of the king, and in the council-chamber, in the presence of the king and that council, accused the Earl of Morton for the murder of the king's father; not opening particularly at that time any other offence against him, as once was intended, and as is pretended to be done hereafter. After large discourse made by the earl for his own acquittal, he concluded, and with such sharp words against the captain his accuser, as, the captain returning to him like and bitter terms, they were ready to pass to blows, which was chiefly stayed by the Lords Lindsay and Cathcart; and the earl was removed into the chapel to his own servants, and the captain put out at the other door to the gardens; others that waited there in great numbers, looked for the beginning of the broil. Albeit many friends and servants of the earl, being a great strength, and able to have delivered him at his pleasure, persuaded the earl to put himself in safety; yet he refused to tarry with them, and returned to the council. And James

Stewart, understanding of his presence there, rushed in again, whereupon a new scuffle began, that was likewise stayed by the lords aforesaid; and hereupon all the earl's servants and friends were commanded, upon pain of treason, to depart, and whereunto the earl commanded them to obey.

"The Earl of Argyle, Lord Chancellor, (the chief instrument against Morton,) asked the Earl of Angus, then sitting in council with them, what should be done; but Angus alleging that the matter did so narrowly touch and concern him, as he would not vote therein. Likewise the Earl of Lennox refused to vote. At length the Earl of Eglinton persuaded that the king's advocate and council might be conferred withal; which advocate being ready, affirmed that, upon such accusations of treasons, the party accused ought to be committed to sure custody, and afterwards tried as to the laws and case should appertain. Whereupon the Earl of Morton was committed to a chamber in Holyrood House, and there kept until the next Monday, on which he was conveyed to the castle of Edinburgh, where he remaineth. The town of Edinburgh, and many others, offered liberally for his delivery; nevertheless, he always refused to be delivered in any sort, other than by the order of the laws. Mr John Craig, in his sermon on the Sunday following, did, upon the leading of his text, inveigh greatly *against false accusations.* Whereupon Captain James Stewart, as it is informed for truth, threatened him with his dagger drawen, charging him to forbear to touch him, or otherwise he should receive his reward. . . . The Lord Boyd, accused also for the murder of the king's father, is summoned to appear, and not yet comed.

"It is said Sir James Balfour had come out of France. . . . It is now thought as dangerous in Scotland to confer with an Englishman, as to rub on the infected with the plague. . . .

"ROBERT BOWES."

RANDOLPH TO LORDS HUNSDON AND HUNTINGDON.[1]

"*Edinburgh, 16th March* 1580-1.

The first portion of the letter is unimportant. He then proceeds as follows:—

"Angus's intent I know not. Yesterday it was determined in council he should be commanded to ward beyond the river of Spey. Carmichael, and the Prior, and Mains, are commanded not to come at Angus, on pain of forfeiture of their goods, *ipso facto;* and means is made to apprehend them, but yet none of them are taken. The Laird of Whittingham is boasted to wear the boots, but I hear it will not be so. Spot had a sight of them, as I hear. . . All the court is set on mischief. Captain Stewart taketh upon him as a prince, and no man so forward as he. I spake, on Tuesday, long with the king. There passed nothing on his part from him, but very good speeches of her majesty, which I exhorted him to shew forth in actions and in deed. He promiseth much if the meeting of the commissioners be. I charged more his council than himself of the unkindness lately shewed unto the Q. my mistress, that no one point of her requests could be yielded, specially for the Earl of Morton, that was, [not] so much as his liberty upon sufficient caution, until the day were appointed for his trial, might be granted. Whereat he fell again in speech of Mr Archibald Douglas; and I answered him with partial dealings, and favour shewed to Sir James Balfour. I told him in what house he lieth in, between the church and castle, upon the right hand. I told who had spoken with him,—Lennox, Seton, and others; and that means would be made shortly to bring him into his own presence. I spake again of the *band in the green box*, containing the names of all the chief persons consenting to the king's murder, which Sir James either hath or can tell of. I told him that I heard daily of new men apprehended, examined, and boasted with the boots, to find matter against the Earl of Morton; and he that was privy to the murder, and in whose house the king was killed, and was therefore condemned by parliament, was suffered to live unpunished and untouched, in his chief and principal town." . . . Randolph then states that he asked leave to depart from Scotland, adding, that after another farewell interview with the king, he hoped, "it would be the last that he ever should have to do with that king and council." "I have again this day spoken with Angus's trusty friend, who gave me some notes touching the bands, and is gone unto him. I have given therein my advice. What will be far-

[1] Harleian, 6999.

ther done I know not; but sure I am Angus will not obey the charge for putting himself in ward. . . . George Fleck had yesternight the boots, and is said to have confessed that the Earl of Morton was privy to the poisoning of the Earl of Athole, whereon they have sent for the Earl of Morton's chamberlain, Sandy Jerdan, from Dumbarton. They have also in hand Sandy ——, George Fleck's servant, whom they suppose to know many of Morton's secrets, &c.—Your L.

"THOMAS RANDOLPH."

RANDOLPH TO LORD HUNSDON.

"*March* 20, 1580-1.

"Whatsoever was intended by my Lord Angus is discovered by the voluntary confession of the Laird of Whittingham, that hath left nothing unspoken that he knew against any man, and much more than any man would have done upon so small occasion at all to say anything, being neither offered the boots, nor other kind of torment. The ministers have seen it, and in their sermons give God great thanks therefor.

"The enterprise should have been (as they say) to have taken the house where the king lieth, by forged keys, and intelligence by some within; to have slain the Earl of Lennox, Montrose, and Argyle; and to have possessed themselves of the king to have sent him into England. Albeit, these things have so small appearance of truth to have been intended indeed, as for mine own part, I mean to suspend my judgment thereof till further trial be had." "He hath also confessed that he was here, with the Earl of Angus, at my lodging, and what passed between us. . . . I think it will fall out that George Fleck hath played as honest a part against his master, as Whittingham hath done for the Earl of Angus, for he hath been sore booted. But his legs serve him well enough to walk up and down, which I know to be true.

"*Poor* Sandy Jerdan came yesterday to this town, from Dumbarton, and is lodged near to the court: one on whom the burden is laid to have ministered the bread and drink that poisoned Athole. So accused by Affleck. What is done to him I know not.

"The suspicion of this poisoning of the Earl of Athole is thought to be great, for that it is said John Provend bought it. And he is fled thereupon, no man knowing where he is. . . . Robert Semple, for the making of a ballad, is taken and put in prison. Robert Lekprevik, for the printing thereof, is also fled, but not found. . . .

"THOMAS RANDOLPH."

SIR JOHN FOSTER TO SIR F. WALSINGHAM.[1]

"Pleasit your Honour to be advertised, that this day a man of mine, whom I sent into Scotland about certain business, is returned unto me with certain news, whereof I think my Lord of Hunsdon hath already written unto you; but, notwithstanding, I thought I could do no less but advertise your honour thereof—that is, of the death of the Earl of Morton, who was convicted on Thursday, and adjudged to be hanged, drawn, and quartered on Friday. And there was twenty-two articles put against him; but there was none that hurt him but the murder of the king, which was laid unto him by four or five sundry witnesses. The first is the Lord Bothwell's testament; the second, Mr Archibald Douglas, when he was his man. Mr Archibald Douglas's man is the accuser of him, that bare a barrel of powder to the blowing up of the king into the air; and that, for haste to come away, the said Mr Archibald Douglas left one of his pantafles at the house-end. And, moreover, he was convicted for the speaking with the Lord Bothwell after his banishment in England before the king's murder, and then the consenting to the murdering of the king, and the binding his band of manrent to the said Lord Bothwell to defend him, and no person to be excepted; and the queen's confession, when she was taken at Carberrie Hill; she said he was the principal man that was the deed doer and the drawer of that purpose. Thus, having none other news worthy of advertisement to send unto your honour at this time, I humbly take my leave, at my house, nigh Alnwick, this 4th June 1581.

"JOHN FOSTER."

"P.S.—The man that brought me these news came from Edinburgh on Friday last, at two of the clock, and then the said Earl of Morton was standing on the scaffold, and it is thought the accusations that were laid against him were very slender, and that he died very stoutly."

[1] Original, June 4, 1581, Alnwick.

No. VII., page 35.

Randolph's Negotiation in Scotland, and Elizabeth's Attempt to save Morton.

The following letter of Randolph to Walsingham, written immediately before his leaving that country, after his unsuccessful attempt to save Morton, and the abstract from his original account of his negotiation upon this subject, contain many interesting particulars, too detailed and minute for a general history :—

RANDOLPH TO WALSINGHAM.[1]

"May it please your honour,—There is so much matter fallen out against Morton, as I am credibly informed, by the confession of Whittingham, brother to Archibald Douglas, George Fleck, Andrew Nesbit, John Reid, and Saunders Jerdan, that it is thought nothing can now save his life. The king's self is so vehement against him, and not one counsellor that dare open his mouth for him. All men are appalled; courage and stomach quite overthrown. His enemies pursue these matters hot against him, and his friends able to do him no good. Neither can I yet be particularly informed of the matters they have against him. I think his days will not be long here; and yet have I wrought for him, and yet do for him as for mine own self. The good course that was intended for meeting of commissioners is now smally accounted of; alleging now that nothing less was intended than that Morton's case should be committed to treaty. Your honour hath now both to consider and advise what is to be done, and that with all expedition.

". . . I have been here so well dealt with, that, besides the libel set upon my lodging's door on Wednesday last, I had a shot bestowed on the window of my chamber, in the place where I am wont to sit and write. My good hap was to be away when it was shot, otherwise either Milles or I had been past writing; for the piece being charged with two bullets, struck the wall opposite before me, and behind him, where I am accustomed to sit, the table between us. Some show of search is made for fashion's sake. The rest I have written to my Lord Hunsdon, &c. And so. . . . Edinburgh, 25th March 1581. T. R."

[1] Orig., March 25, 1581.

MR RANDOLPH'S NEGOTIATION IN SCOTLAND.[2]

"17th January, R. took his journey into Scotland from Berwick.

"By the way, he received word of Morton's being removed from Edinburgh castle to Dumbarton castle, which made him hasten forward. Next day after his arrival he had an audience of the king. The king promised Morton should be put to his trial.

"2d Audience, 21st January.—The king promised that nothing should be done against Morton without open trial and lawful favour. About this time came the bruit of her majesty's forces about the Borders; this gave him [Randolph] greater boldness to proceed both with the king and against D'Aubigny.

"3d Audience, 25th January.—R. charged some of the Scottish council with breaking the amity, especially Lennox, and produced two intercepted letters, written by the B. of Glasgow. Lennox warmly defended himself. He gave copies of the letters, and demanded a speedy reply. All this time the report of the forces on the Borders continued.

"4th Audience, 30th January.—The king begged to hear any further matter against Lennox. After this the ambassador began to deal according to the third part of his instructions: to deal with such of the nobility as came unto him; to represent the hazard to the king's person, and the danger to themselves, (intending to make out a party in this way, fit to join with her majesty's forces.) At first he had good hope; but finding that, day by day, the king grew more affectionate to the one and aggravated against the other, they all began to fail; and 'no man seemed willing either to enterprise it himself, or join with others in this action.' As these things were thus underhand in brewing, the king sent his answer by a clerk of the council.

"1st, That Morton's trial was delayed for want of Archibald Douglas.

"2d, The matter against Lennox seemed to be forged.

"After this, the king assembled the general estates of the realm, the matter being weighty, on the 20th February. The interval gave R. time to labour privately with the nobility, represent-

[2] The original paper, of which this is an abstract, appears to me to be in the handwriting of one of Walsingham's clerks.

ing the greatness of Aubigny, his offences against Elizabeth, and the danger to themselves. He also, in a private access to the king, laid before him his estate at large: the king took all well.

"All this time the Earl of Lennox made private means to speak with Randolph, standing still upon his purgation, which (being so commanded) he still resisted, which, notwithstanding grieved him [Randolph] much, as he understood a reconciliation was about to be wrought between Lennox and Morton, and the king approved of it; and was to have gone to Glasgow the better to contrive the matter; 'albeit that purpose took not effect; for Morton's friends, esteeming this course dishonourable, broke it off.'

"It was next determined to send Lord Seton from the king to her maj.

"This stayed by Randolph.

"The bruit of the gathering of English forces on the Borders continuing, it was determined to appoint a lieutenant and twelve captains, with commissions to levy 120 men.

"All this time, as matters grew worse, Mr Randolph omitted not underhand to procure a party, labouring by all means to make Morton's case fearful unto them, and the greatness of Lennox odious; alluring them by promises of Elizabeth's support. Notwithstanding all, *vel prece vel pretio*, though many seemed *forward*, no man would be *foremost*,—no assurance could be had except on Angus, Mar, and Glencairn. They said, also, there was a want of sufficient proof of the matters with which Lennox was charged withal.

"On the other hand, the friends of Lennox were not idle, and made a great impression, urging that Elizabeth's injustice and severity against an innocent man, shewed she had more in view than the trial of Morton and the dismissal of D'Aubigny.

"At last the 20th of February, the day of the convention, arrived. R. before it had a private conference with the king, and he obtained an audience of the whole assembly on the 24th February, when he repeated all his message and arguments,—shewed all that the queen had done for the realm and the king, in a speech of almost two hours' length,—added some further matter against D'Aubigny, contained in Ross's letter, and so left the Parliament House. D'Aubigny at that assembly said nothing.

"To this assembly came Angus, with his friends, having all the time before kept himself aloof, (he had assurance from the king,) spending the day within doors, and the night in the fields, for fear of his enemies; but, as it fortuned, his abode was not long in Edinburgh, for being secretly advised of certain practices intended against him by the Earl of Montrose and his own wife, upon the intercepting of certain letters passed between them, suddenly, in the night, he departed the town unto Dalkeith; where, finding his wife, and after speech with her, he in due time prevented the mischief, acquainted the king with the matter dealing by Mar, who abode still in court, and sent her away home unto her father.[1]

"The convention held not long. It was agreed, if war came from England, £40,000 Scots should be advanced by the barons and boroughs. Every day bred a new disorder. The bruit of wars grew stronger,—men stirring in all parts,—the ambassador grew odious, and his death suspected, and the court in a manner desperate. For all this he forbore not to call for his answer: the council was perplexed, and Lennox still stood up to his justification.

"Morton abode still at Dumbarton, straitlier kept than before, (although his larger liberty was craved by the ambassador.) Angus absented himself from the court; and being suspected of dealing with the ambassador, made Lennox, Montrose, and Argyle, and that party, stand on their guard. The party from the first got up by the ambassador, yet hung in doubt; but Angus was weakened by the late accident. Montrose and Rothes became his deadly enemies, and all went wrong.

"8th March. The answer so long in framing was at last given by the king. It was stated in it, that all griefs and jealousies should be healed by a meeting of *commissioners* on the frontiers. During the time that this answer was aframing, the ministers, who continually in their sermons preached against the disorders of the court, to prevent the wrath of God, that now seemed to be imminent, published a general fast, to be held through the realm from the *first* Sunday in March to the *second* of the same. This promised meeting of commissioners on the Borders might

[1] Her father was Mar.

have been to good purpose, had it not been for the discovery of the practices between Angus and the ambassador, by Angus and Morton's own servants, which caused the ambassador to be greatly suspected and disliked. Whereupon all persons were examined that resorted to him—viz., George Fleck, the Laird of Mains, the Laird of Spot, John Reid, and Whittingham,[1] all servants and nearest kinsmen to Morton and Angus. Angus himself was banished beyond the Spey. He laboured, notwithstanding, by conference with the clans, his friends Glencairn, Boyd, Lochleven, Clanquill, Dryburgh, and Drumquhassel, to combine together a sufficient party to join with her majesty's forces on the Borders; and might have wrought good effect, had not their own trustiest servants betrayed them, overthrowing all their purposes, to the great danger of themselves and Mr Randolph. The faithless and traitorous dealing of Whittingham was most noted, like a deep dissembler and fearful wretch. From the beginning, having had the handling and knowledge of all matters of importance and secrecy between Angus and the rest, in the end, without compulsion, by a voluntary confession, he discovered their whole proceedings, not regarding his nearness of blood, or bond of duty, to the Earls of Angus and Morton, or the danger he threw the other noblemen into. This man's treachery made Angus be put to the horn, and the ambassador ill handled. The king upon this intending to acquaint Elizabeth with the result of the confessions by an envoy, and proceeding with greater severity against Angus, Morton, and Mar, Randolph, finding his longer abode useless, and dangerous to himself, retired to Berwick, there to await her majesty's further orders. Within two days a gentleman from Angus and Mar came to him to declare their state, and wishing to know when and where they were to await his coming. But finding their party not sufficiently strong nor trustworthy, it was thought imprudent to hazard the advance of her majesty's forces; and so the messenger was dismissed. Thus were they deserted. In the meantime news came daily of their proscription, and seizing their houses, summoning of Stirling castle held by Mar, fortifying Leith; at last they heard that Mar was reconciled, and Angus left alone. Such being the state of matters, it was thought best to discharge her majesty's forces, to remain in these terms of *divorce*, and to call Mr Randolph home."[2]

[1] Douglas of Whittingham.

It appears, in the above account of Randolph's negotiation, although I have not given the passage in the abstract, that at one time there was a proposal for a reconciliation between Lennox and Morton, on conditions which the king approved of. The following paper shews that these conditions were of the most severe nature, imprisonment for life being the first:—

CONDITIONS OFFERED BY THE KING TO MORTON AND ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS. —16th May.

"Angus to move his uncle—

"1. That he shall be confined for life.

"2. That the Earl of Morton and A. D.[3] shall renounce all actions for goods taken from them since 29th December last.

"3. That he shall give up Dalkeith to the king for ever.

"4. Renounce his right to the castle of Blackness, and sheriffship and lands of Linlithgow, to the king.

"5. Give up the office of Admiralty and sheriffship of Lothian to the king.

"6. Cause his base son, James, prior of Pluscardine, give the priory to Lord Seton.

"7. Pay the whole charges of the soldiers levied since last December.

"8. Pay to the king a 100 stone weight of bullion, coined without warrant during his regency."

[2] Original, May 6.

[3] Archibald Douglas.

No. VIII., page 44.

Scottish Preaching in 1582. *John Durie's Sermon.*

The sermon of Mr John Durie, alluded to in the text, is particularly described in the following extract from a letter of Sir Henry Woddrington to Sir Francis Walsingham. It is preserved in the British Museum, Caligula, C. vii. fol. 7, and dated 26th May 1582:—

WODDRINGTON TO WALSINGHAM.

"Upon Wednesday, being the 23d inst., Mr John Durie preached in the Cathedral Church of Edinburgh, where divers noblemen were present, the effect

thereof tending to the reproof of the Bishop of Glasgow, as plainly terming him an apostate and mansworn traitor to God and His Church. And that even as the Scribes and Pharisees could find none so meet to betray Christ as one of His own school and disciples, even so this duke, with the rest of the faction, cannot find so meet an instrument to subvert the religion planted in Scotland as one of their own number, one of their own brethren, and one nourished among their own bowels, who likewise touched the virtuous bringing up of the king, fearing now they have some device to withdraw him from the true fear of God, and to follow the devices and inventions of men, affirming that he was moved to think so, for that he saw all that were manifestly known to be enemies to the Church and religion to be nearest unto his person, and others that were favourers and maintainers thereof put off the court, or to have small countenance there shewed them. And likewise, he touched the present sent by the Duke of Guise to the king in these manner of speeches:—'I pray you what should move Guise, that bloody persecutor and enemy unto all truth, that pillar of the Pope, to send this present by one of his trustiest servants unto our king? Not for any love: no, no, his pretence is known. And I beseech the Lord the Church of Scotland feel it not oversoon. The king's majesty was persuaded not to receive it; for why? What amity or friendship can we look for at his hands, who hath been the bloodiest persecutor of the professors of the truth in all France? Neither was there ever any notable murder or havoc of God's people at any time in all France but he was at it in person; and yet for all this, the duke and Arran will needs have our king to take a present from him. If God did threaten the captivity and spoil of Jerusalem because that their king, Hezekiah, did receive a letter and present from the King of Babylon, shall we think to be free committing the like, or rather worse? And because you, my lords, which both do see me, and even at this present hears me,—I say, because you shall not be hereafter excusable,—I tell it you with tears. I feel such confusion to be like to ensue that I fear me will be the subversion and ruin of the preaching of God's Evangile here in the Church of Scotland. I am the more plain with you, because I know there is some of you in the same action with the rest. I know I shall be called to an account for these words here spoken; but let them do with this carcass of mine what they will, for I know my soul is in the hands of the Lord, and therefore I will speak, and that to your condemnation, unless you speedily return." And then, in the prayers made, he prayed unto the Lord, either to convert or confound the duke. The sermon was very long, godly, and plain, to the great comfort and rejoice of the most number that heard it or do hear of it."

No. IX., page 48.

Sir Robert Bowes to Walsingham, written immediately previous to the Raid of Ruthven.—15*th August* 1582.

The minute and accurate information of Bowes, communicated to Walsingham and the faction of the Protestant lords, which led to the enterprise termed the Raid of Ruthven, is proved by the following extract from a letter of Sir Robert Bowes to Walsingham, dated Durham, 15th August 1582:—

BOWES TO WALSINGHAM.

". . . I am informed the duke intendeth to persuade the king's majesty to commit to ward the Earls of Glencairn and Mar, the Lord Lindsay and Boyd, and sundry others, best affected in religion, and loving the amity aforesaid; and also afterwards to hasten the death of the principals of them, whom I hear that he will not pursue for the death of David the Italian, (as from France ye have been advertised,) but rather to charge them with late matter and conspiracy intended, and to have been put in execution by them and their complices in the last month of July against the king and himself. And in case the information given me be true, then there is a secret intention and practice in device,—that after the execution of such principal persons in Scotland as would be most ready to defend religion, and the apprehension and safe custody of others known to be chiefly devoted that way, the alteration of that state in Scotland should be attempted: and the matter to reach into England so far, and with such speed as the [confederates] who practise could perform. The truth and secret herein may be best learned in France, I think, from whence the device and direction for the execution is said to come. The

variance between the duke and the Earl of Gowrie,—the progress of the matter against the new bishop of Glasgow, both entreated in Edinburgh,—the labour of the duke to win nobles and gentlemen to enter into friendship and band with him,—the purpose of some persons in Scotland to proceed in the provision of remedy against the dangerous course presently holden there,—with all other intelligence and occurrents in that state and realm . . . are so sufficiently signified to you, as I need not trouble you with needless repetition."

The conspiracy with which Lennox meant to charge the Protestant party alluded to in the above letter of Bowes, must be the same as that mentioned by Sir Henry Woddrington in a letter addressed (as I think) to Walsingham some time before this, dated 19th July 1582. After stating that the king was with the duke at St Johnston, he observed that "the ministers had accused the duke of supporting the Bishop of Glasgow, who was excommunicated." He then adds, "The duke is about to charge them with the late conspiracy and practice, wherein they were about to have procured him to have been shot and slain." . . .

No. X., page 52.

Archibald Douglas to Randolph.

It is stated in the text that, on the successful issue of the Raid of Ruthven, the notorious Archibald Douglas wrote from London an exulting letter to his old friend, Randolph. The original is in the State-paper Office, endorsed by Randolph himself "*Mr Nemo.*" It is spirited and characteristic :—

ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS TO RANDOLPH.—12th September 1582, London.

"Sir,—From Scotland, by letters, I am advertised that the duke being in Edinburgh with some few lords, he made choice of Herries and Newbottle to send the king, and lords with his majesty, some offers, which were all rejected.

"The said lords returned to Edinburgh accompanied with Cessford and Coldingknowes, who gave the duke a charge to render the castle of Dumbarton to the Earl of Mar, in name of the king; to avoid the town of Edinburgh, and retire himself to Dalkeith or Aberdour, in private manner, there to await the king's farther pleasure. The duke seeming to obey the charge, made him as he would ride to Dalkeith; but in the midway he turned, and is fled to Dumbarton, where I think he shall not make great cheer, if he render not that castle shortly.

"The king will hold his convention at Edinburgh upon the 15th day hereof; to the which the duke is charged to compear; but I think he shall not obey. When law has given the stroke against him, I believe ye shall hear news of his escaping. Your special good friend, the Earl of Arran, for the singular and constant affection he bears to the duke, offers to accuse him of high treason, if they will spare his life to serve and assist the party that is with the king. Pity it were that he should not be well used in respect of his rare qualities, natural, beautified with his virtuous education in moral philosophy; wherein he has so well profited, that his behaviour is marvellous, specially in treating of ambassadors; which makes me to believe that your worship, as one honoured with that dignity, will interpone some special request in his favours. If ye be disposed so to do, I will take the pains to be your messenger, for the safe conveying thereof to her majesty's ministers in Scotland.

"Your physic, ministered at your late being in that realm, begins now to be of so mighty operation, that banished men are like to have place to seek trial of their innocency, or else, I think, very shortly it shall be hard to discern the subject from the traitor. From such a market ye may think that I shall not be long absent. I am to take my journey towards that country shortly. If your sorel horse's price be so low as a poor banished man's money may amount unto it, I pray you send him hither, and I will pay what price ye set upon him, so it be reasonable. And so, &c.

"London, this 12th of September.

"A. DOUGLAS."

No. XI., page 55.

The Duke of Lennox's last Letter to the King of Scots.

This letter is preserved in the State-paper Office, in a copy of the time, endorsed by Burghley, "From the Duke of Lennox to the Scottish King from Dumbarton, 16th December 1582." It is as follows :—

"Sire,—Je me rescens le plus malheureux homme du monde, de voir la mauvaise opinion que vostre majeste a prise de moy, et de ce que la persuasion de ceux, qui sont aupres de vous maintenant, vous ont fait croire, que j'avois aultre intention que de vous rendre l'obeissance et la fidelitè que je vous doibs. Croyez je vous supplie tres humblement, que ces motz d'inconstance et desloyaultè que me mandes dans vostre lettre qu'ay laissé gaigner a mes ennemis sur moy, m'ont raportè une grande crevecoeur. Car je n'eusse jamais pensè que vostre majeste m'eust voulu ecrire telz mots, et je me prie a Dieu que tous ceulx qui vous serve, et se disent vos fideles serviteurs, vous serve avec aultant d'affection et de fidelitè comme jay le fait, pendant que jay eu ceste honneur d'estre a vostre service.

"Sire,—Je ne crains nullement deestre accusé d'inconstance et de desloyaultè. C'est chose jamais remarque' en moy, mais si l'on me veult accuser d'avoir faict une tasche a mon honneur pour vous obeir, il faut bien que je l'avoue, car il est tres veritable, et me senible que l'engagement de mon dicte honneur vous doibt assez rendre le preuve de ma dict obeissance et fidelitè.

"Ce m'est ung piteux reconfort a mon partement, que apres avoir receu le dur traictment que j'ay receu, et endurè les paines, et tormens et ennuis; qu'ay endure depuis trois ans, pour m'estre affectionnè a vostre service, en vous servent fidelement (comme jay faict) que de voir voistre majeste indigne contre moy, pour seulement avoir evite le danger qui me pouvoit avenir, et lequelle peutestre avoit este conclu sans vostre sceu, sous ombre que les Comptes d'Angus et de Mar n'avoient pas signè l'asseurance, dont la procuration de dict Mar peut donner asses tesmoignage. Et pense que si tout chose soit bien rechercheé que [vous] trouverez que comme il estoit entre Falkirk et Callender, qu'il y en a eu de sa troupe, que luy donnera conseil de m'enfermer au dict Callender, et d'envoyer querir a le dict Angous, ce qu'ayant entendu, voyant qu'il n'y avoit pas ung des seigneurs n'y gentilhommes aryves a Lythgou, le Mardy a six heures de soir, excepte Laird de Wachton et les serviteurs et amis de Monsr. de Leviston, pour la seurte de ma vie, laquelle je scay estre rechercheé par eulx, je me suis seulement retire en ce lieu, en attendant que vostre majeste donnast ordre que je puisse passer seurement, et ce qui vous avoit demandé de passer par Carleill, estoit parce que ce chemin la m'estoit beaucoup plus seur que celui de Barwick. Mais puis que c'est vostre volontè que je prenne ce chemin la je vous obeiray, et suyvant vostre commandement je partiray Mardy de ce lieu et m'en iray coucher a Glasgow, le Mecredy a Callender, en Jeudy a Dalkeith, et Vendredy a Dunbar, et si mes hardes que je suis constraint de faire faire a Lislebourg, me soyent apportees le jour la, je ne faudray d'estre le lendemain a Barwick, et ou elles me pourront estre apportees. Je vous supplie tres humblement, de me permettre de les attendre au dict Dunbar, et de me vouloir faire envoyer a Dalkeith tout ce que m'avez promis, par le dict Maistre George Young, et aussi de mander ung gentilhomme de me venir rencontrer que le dict Maistre George mande a vostre majeste, lequel vous yra trouver puis qu'il m'a veu party de —— a fin de vous asseurer de l'obeissance que je vous vouley rendre.—Priant Dieu, sire, qu'il vous ayt en sa sauve garde. De Dumbarton, 16 de Decembre 1582.

"De vostre majeste,

"Le tres humble et fidele serviteur,

"LENNOX."

No. XII., page 64.

The King's Recovery of his Liberty in 1583.

In the month of May 1583, when James was pondering on the plot for the recovery of his liberty, and his escape from the thraldom in which he was kept by the Ruthven lords, there occurs a remarkable letter written by Fowler to Walsingham, which shews that the young king had first disclosed his secret intentions to the Master of Glammis. This is strange enough; for Glammis, as we have seen, (*supra*, p. 49,) was one of the leaders of the "Raid of Ruthven." The letter is as follows.—It is preserved in British Museum, Caligula, C. vii. fol. 148:—

FOWLER TO WALSINGHAM.

"*May* 1583.

"MY LORD,—After my most humble commendations and service, I do send your honour such proofs of my fidelity, that your honour may thereby well judge of my true meaning. The king hath entered in conference with the

Master of Glammis after this sort:—'I intend to go in progress, and first to Falkland, and thereafter to the Glammis. What think you Master,—shall I be welcome?' The other answered that his welcome should be better than his majesty's entertainment; because, saith he, 'I am less able now than I was these five years before:' meaning of his loss and fine of xx. thousand pounds, which he paid, by the Duke of Lennox's means, for the killing of the Earl of Crawford's man. The king answered, 'Master, are you not yet contented and sufficiently revenged? If you had not turned that night to Ruthven, these things, which were then devised, would never have taken effect. Well, Master, I will forgive you; and if you will conform yourself now to my request, your losses shall be faithfully repaired you hereafter.'—'Sir,' said he, 'what is your will? Command me in anything: your majesty shall be obeyed,—yea, were it in the killing of the best that are about your majesty.' The king answered, 'Master, I mean not so: but because I think it stands not with my honour to be guided by other men's will, I would things were changed,—which you only may perform, if you follow my device. None mistrusteth you; and, therefore, I will come to the Glammis, where you may have such power for that effect, that I will remain your prisoner, so that you debar these from me who hath me at their devotion.' To conclude, the other hath agreed thereto, and shall conclude therein, if good counsel prevent it not. . . .

"As these things must come to light, so would I they so should be used, as the chief intelligence should be known not to have comed from hence; otherwise I shall be suspected, and incur the king's hatred and the Master of Glammis's displeasure."

No. XIII., page 68.

Walsingham's Embassy to the Scottish Court in September 1583.

The following letter, from the State-paper Office, relates to this interesting embassy:—

WALSINGHAM TO BURGHLEY.

"*Edinburgh, 6th September* 1583.

"My very good Lord,—Since I last wrote unto your lordship I have received three sundry letters from you, by the which I find your lordship hath obtained so much leisure as to see your house at Burghley; where I could have been content, having finished here, to her majesty's contentment the charge committed to me, to have met your lordship.—I mean with the leave of God, according to my promise made to Sir Thomas Cecil, to see him there, and to survey such faults as have been committed in your buildings by reason of your lordship's absence; and yet am I in hope to come time enough in my return to see him at Snape; for here I see little hope to do any good, so resolutely and violently are they carried into a course altogether contrary to the amity of this crown, which by the better sort is greatly misliked of: and it is thought that they which have the whole managing of the affairs cannot long stand, so hateful do they grow generally to all estates in this realm.

"Though I press my audience very earnestly, yet can they not resolve neither of the time nor place. They are now, as I learn, busily occupied how they may excuse their breaches of promises and other attempts against her majesty, but most especially how they may excuse the late outrage committed in the middle marches, by yielding fair words and promises for satisfaction. This kind of proceeding cannot but render them hateful that now manage the affairs; for I find the Borderers, the loose men only excepted, generally inclined to continue good peace with England. The Burrows, also, who live by traffic, and are grown to be wealthy by the long-continued peace between the two realms, do not willingly hear of any breach. The ministers, who foresee how greatly the common cause should be shaken if discord between the two nations should break out, will not omit to do their best endeavours to prevent the same. I will not fail, at my access, to press both speedy redress and full satisfaction, as well of that outrage as of divers others committed this last month. . . . It shall be necessary for her majesty, in these doubtful times, considering how they stand affected that have now the helm in hand here, to place some horsemen and footmen upon the Borders for a season, which may serve well for some other purpose, as your lordship shall hereafter understand. . . . —At Edinburgh, the 6th September 1583.

"Your lordship's, &c.

"FRANCIS WALSINGHAM.

"After I had written my letter, Mr James Melvil came unto me from the king to excuse the delay of my audience, without bringing any certain knowledge when the same should be granted, which moved me to deal roundly with him."

No. XIV.

Historical Remarks on the Queen of Scots' supposed Accession to Babington's Conspiracy.

That Mary was a party to this plot, so far as it involved a project for her escape, may be assumed as certain; indeed, she appears to have admitted it, by implication at least, on her trial. But the question remains, and it is one deeply affecting Elizabeth and her ministers—Was she cognisant of the resolution to assassinate the English queen?—did she permit, or encourage this atrocious design? After a careful research into the history of this conspiracy, and an anxious desire to procure and weigh every document connected with it, I believe Mary's solemn assertion to be true,—that she neither gave any encouragement to the plot, nor was aware of its existence. Hume, who pronounces Mary guilty, has written on this conspiracy with all his inimitable clearness and plausibility; but unfortunately with much of his usual carelessness as to facts and dates, which enter deeply into the question, and which a little trouble might have enabled him to discover and to rectify. Dr Lingard, in an acute note added to the last edition of his History,[1] has supported Mary's innocence; and Dr Robertson, without interrupting his narrative by critical remarks, has assumed it. Referring the reader to the works of these eminent men, I shall now briefly give some additional facts and observations, from which there arises the strongest presumption, if not absolute proof, of the innocence of the Queen of Scots.

First. It is evident, from the history of this conspiracy as given in the text, that Phelipps the decipherer had much, almost everything, in his power as to the proof of Mary's guilt or innocence. He was admitted by Walsingham into all "the secrets of the cause," (to use Paulet's phrase;) he enjoyed the full confidence of this minister and his royal mistress. It does not appear that any other person about Walsingham or the Queen of England could decipher. There are letters in the State-paper Office, and in the British Museum, which prove that whenever any intercepted letters in cipher fell into the hands of Elizabeth or Secretary Walsingham, they were forthwith sent to Phelipps "to be made English;"[2] and it is certain that he did decipher, and retain in his hands for ten days, the letter in cipher from Mary to Babington, upon a copy of which that princess was convicted. It is evident from all this, that Phelipps had the power and the opportunity to alter the letters of Babington or of Mary which were sent him to be deciphered; and owing to the ignorance of his employers in this intricate science, he might have done so without much, or almost any fear of discovery. But it may be asked, Could he be so base as to garble these letters? or was Walsingham so lost to all sense of justice and honour as to have permitted it?

To this I reply, that there is preserved in the State-paper Office a letter or petition of Phelipps to the Earl of Salisbury, an extract from which I give below, which proves, that in one noted instance he had availed himself of his talents and opportunity to a base and unscrupulous extent. In this case he did not add to or alter any letter placed in his hands; but he did much more. He composed, or created, an entirely imaginary correspondence. He wrote

[1] Note M., vol. viii,, History of England, p. 434.

[2] MS. Letter, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 455. Davison to Phelipps, December 11.

DAVISON TO PHELIPPS.

"Mr Phelipps. Her majesty delivered me the ticket here enclosed for your exercise, because she thinketh you now be idle. When you have *made English thereof*, I doubt not but you will return it back to her highness: and so, in the meantime, I commit you to God.—At the court the 11th December."

There is another letter of Walsingham in Caligula, C. ix. fol. 455, written, I think, evidently to Phelipps, though the address does not appear:—

"I send you herewith enclosed another letter, written from the King of Spain unto some noblemen within this realm, which was delivered unto me by her majesty, together with the other letter of Don Bernardino remaining in your hands, *which, if it may be deciphered*, will, I hope, lay open the treachery that reigneth here amongst us. Her majesty hath promised to double your pension, and to be otherwise good unto you.—And so I commit you to God. The 30th Nov. 1585.

"F. WALSINGHAM."

letters under the name of an imaginary person to a real person, who enjoyed the confidence of the Spanish government, and who, by the forgery of these letters, was betrayed into a correspondence with Phelipps, who made his own uses of his base contrivance. All this he acknowledges in a letter to the Earl of Salisbury, which is an undoubted original, written in his own hand,[1] pleading, in extenuation of the forgery, that it was done for the benefit of the state.

Such being the unscrupulous character of this person, is it any overstrained supposition, that such a man would have felt little hesitation in altering the letters of the Queen of Scots, to suit the purposes of her enemies?

But here it is asked, (and the argument is insisted on by Hume,) Would a man of such high honour and probity as Walsingham have been guilty of so base a proceeding? As to this alleged probity and honour, Hume, it is evident, trusted to the common eulogies which, in popular works, have been bestowed on Elizabethan statesmen. Happily, however, the correspondence of Elizabeth's ministers remains to test this praise; and Walsingham has left many letters which prove incontestably that, in working out any object which he was persuaded was for the good of the state, he was quite as crafty and unscrupulous as his brethren. In those dark times, the scale of moral duty and honour was miserably low: justice, truth, religion, were names common in men's mouths, but slightly regarded in their actual dealings. To open letters, to rob an ambassador's desk, to corrupt his servants, to forge his signature, were all allowable methods of furthering the business of the state. The reader is already well aware of the little value placed on human life, of the frequency of private assassination, and the encouragement given to it by the highest statesmen of the age. To argue on the honour and probity of such men—as we should be entitled to do had they lived in our own times (lax as this age may be in some things)—must lead to error. Nay, Hume himself was aware of, and states one instance in which Walsingham acted with a total disregard of all high principle. This historian tells us that the English secretary, when he had intercepted and opened Mary's letters to Babington, added to them a postscript in the same cipher, in which she desired him to inform her of the names of the conspirators; hoping thus to elicit from Babington the whole secrets of the plot. Was it possible that any man of common probity could have so acted? and what are we to think of his letter quoted in the text, in which, in obedience to the English queen's commands, he solicited Paulet to put Mary privately to death? Could a man of the slightest probity have written that letter?

It appears, then, that Phelipps and Walsingham were persons capable of such a course as garbling and altering Mary's letters: it is evident that Phelipps had the power and the talent to

[1] State-paper Office, April 29, 1606. Thomas Phelipps, original, in his own hand, dated (in pencil) April 29, 1606:—

"Phelipps humbly prayeth, that the king's majesty may be moved to descend into a gracious consideration of his case, and he doubteth not but his majesty shall find cause to conceive much better of his proceedings than it seemeth he doth.

"The truth is, that there never was any real or direct correspondence held with Owen. But, by a mere stratagem and sleight in the late queen's time, that state upon an occasion, was entertained in an opinion of an intelligence with an imaginary person on this side, such as was none *in rerum naturâ*, which Owen, abused, did manage on that side, as Phelipps for the queen's service did on this. The manner whereof and the means were particularly declared to my Lord of Salisbury by Ph. when he was first called in question, who had himself made some use of it in the queen's time; and you, Mr Lieutenant, can, best of any man, remember how the queen and my Lord of Essex served themselves of it.

"In the carriage of this business, the imaginary correspondent being pressed to find somebody that should set afoot certain overtures, touching peace and the jewels of the house of Burgundy, and suchlike, Phelipps was nominated and used for those purposes, to the contentment of both sides, as it fell out at sundry times, without that it was known, or so much as suspected, that Phelipps was the man that indeed managed all matters.

"With the queen's life this course was supposed to have been quite determined; but shortly after, upon the hope of amity which was growing between this realm and Spain, an address was newly made to the imaginary correspondent in Maucididor's name, to have Phelipps moved to concur with those that should be set a-work both for peace and league of firm amity between the princes, with large offers, and promises of honourable gratification to all such as could do any good therein.

"Which being a thing in itself not unlawful, and Phelipps seeing opportunity offered him to make himself thereby of use, he willingly embraced."

do so; and we have seen, from the history of the conspiracy given in the text, that both were anxious to convict her and bring her to punishment. But it may be said, All this is presumption: where is the proof that they added anything to these letters? In answer to this may be first quoted, the forged postscript endorsed in Phelipps's handwriting, "*Postscript of the Scottish Queen's letter to Babington,*"[1] inquiring the names of the six gentlemen. Hume, following Camden,[2] asserts that Walsingham added a postscript of this import to one of Mary's letters to Babington. It is singular, however, that it should not have struck this historian, that no such postscript appeared in any of Mary's alleged letters produced at the trial; and had this charge, which involves so grave a delinquency in Walsingham, rested on the single assertion of Camden, one would certainly have hesitated to believe it. But the case is altered by the discovery (mentioned in the text, p. 127) of this postscript in cipher, endorsed by Phelipps, and preserved in the State-paper Office. Now, such a postscript was either what it purports to be—an original of Mary's, or a true copy of such an original, or a forgery. If it were an original of Mary's, or a true copy of such, why, it may be asked, was it not produced against her at the trial? It connected her with the six conspirators, who were Babington's associates; and in this light would have been decided evidence against her. But no use was made of it at the trial; and it may be conjectured, from this suppression, that, after having exercised his skill in fabricating it, Phelipps changed his scheme for the conviction of the Scottish queen, and introduced the sentences connecting her with the six gentlemen who were to assassinate the English queen into the body of the letters, rather than in a postscript at the end.

In the next place, although there is no direct evidence by which we can detect Phelipps or Walsingham in the act of garbling and altering Mary's letters, yet strong presumptive evidence is furnished by the circumstances of the trial itself; and this even after making allowance for the partiality and disregard of justice which appears in all the judicial proceedings of those times.

It is evident that Mary could only be proved guilty by the production of her own letters; by the production of the minutes, or rough drafts of these in her own hand; by the evidence of her secretaries, Nau and Curle, who wrote the letters; or by the evidence of Phelipps, who deciphered them. The limits to which I must confine these remarks will not permit me to go into detail; but it may be observed, that on each of these modes of proof, the evidence against the Scottish queen either totally fails, or is defective.

1. No original of Babington's long letter to her, or of her answer to Babington, was produced. Mary anxiously demanded the production of both, and positively asserted that she had never written the letter of which they produced a copy; but she demanded it in vain, and she was convicted on the evidence of this avowed copy.

2. It was stated by Nau, her secretary, that the greater part of her letter to Babington was *copied* by him from a minute in Mary's own hand, written in French, which, he stated, would be found amongst her papers,[3] and which, if we are to believe Nau's declaration, Elizabeth and her ministers had really in their hands, and could have produced if they pleased.[4] Now, these French minutes, written in Mary's hand, if they had contained the guilty passages connecting her with the plot against Elizabeth's life, would undoubtedly have proved the case against her. Why, then, were they not produced? It seems plain that, if found at all, of which there is reason to doubt,[5] they

[1] *Supra*, p. 127.

[2] Hume, p. 453. Edition 1832. In one volume. Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 517.

[3] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, September 7, 1586.

WAAD TO PHELIPPS.

"Her majesty's pleasure is, you should presently repair hither; for that, upon Nau's confession, it should appear we have not performed the search sufficiently; for he doth assure we shall find, amongst the minutes which were in Pasquier's chests, the copies of the letters wanting, both in French and English."

[4] Orig., State-paper Office, Nau's first answer, September 3, 1586.—"Il luy pleust me bailler une minute de lettre escripte de sa main pour la polir et mettre au net, ainsi qu'il apparoit a vos Honneurs avoir este faict ayant l'une et l'autre entre vos mains."

[5] On the 3d September, Nau, in a paper in the State-paper Office, endorsed by Burghley, "Nau's first Answer," speaks as if Elizabeth and her ministers had Mary's original minutes,

did not contain any mention of the plot against Elizabeth's life. Here again the proof against the Scottish queen totally fails.

3. As to Nau and Curle, the manner of dealing with these two secretaries of Mary, betrays in a striking way the weakness of the proof against her. She anxiously requested to be allowed to examine them; and engaged, if this were permitted, to prove by their testimony that she was innocent. This was denied: she was shewn some depositions to which they had attached their signatures; and other declarations were produced, wholly written by them, the contents of which, it was argued, proved her guilty of sending the long letter to Babington. Mary's reply to these depositions has been already stated in the text; but it is here material to attend to an observation of Dr Lingard, who contends, and apparently with perfect justice, that, judging from the only papers which now remain, it does not appear that Nau or Curle were ever shewn the original of Mary's letter in cipher to Babington, or the true deciphered copy of it; but merely an abstract of the principal points in it, so made up as to render it doubtful whether they included the guilty passages which Mary so solemnly affirmed were not dictated or written by her.[1] It is true, indeed, that in the State-paper Office, and in the British Museum also, there are preserved *copies* of Mary's letter to Babington, with the *copy* of an attestation, signed by Curle and Nau; —but in what terms is it given? Do they verify, on oath, that this is a true copy of the letter written by them from Mary's dictation, and sent to Babington? Far from it. Nau simply says, he truly thinks, to the best of his recollection, this is the letter; and Curle, that it was either this letter, or one like it, that he put in cipher.[2] And it was on such an attestation as this that Burghley contended that the Scottish queen was guilty?

4. There was yet one other way in which the defects of the proof against Mary might have been supplied. If Walsingham and Burghley could not produce the original of her letter to Babington—if they had no minutes of this letter in her own handwriting—they still had Phelipps, who had deciphered it, and who could have attested on oath the accuracy of his own decipher, and its agreement with the copy produced at the trial. Why was this man not produced? Can the motive be doubted?

There are three original papers preserved in the State-paper Office, which appear to me to establish Mary's innocence, on as convincing grounds as the question admits of. It has been already noticed, that when Nau affirmed that the greater part of Mary's letter to Babington was taken by him from an original in the queen's hand, and that this minute of her answer would be found in her repositories, a strict search was made, which was wholly unsuccessful; and on the 4th September Walsingham became convinced that "the minute was not extant." This failure of obtaining proof against Mary threw Walsingham into great perplexity, in the midst of which he wrote this letter to Phelipps:—

WALSINGHAM TO PHELIPPS.

"This morning I received the enclosed from Francis Milles; and this afternoon he made report unto me of his proceeding with Curle accordingly as is set down in the enclosed; by the which you may perceive that Curle doth both testify the receipt of Babington's letters, as also the queen his mistress's answer to the same, wherein he chargeth Nau to have been a principal instrument. I took upon me to put him in comfort of favour, in case he would deal plainly; being moved thereto for that the minute of her answer is not extant, and that I saw Nau resolved to confess no more than

written by herself, in their hands. But next day, September 4, Walsingham, in a letter to Phelipps, State-paper Office, says, "*the minute of her answer is not extant;*" and on the 7th September, these alleged minutes and letter of Mary's were still wanting; for Waad writes to Phelipps to search anew for them. (State-paper Office, Waad to Phelipps, 7th September 1586.) I have discovered no proof that they were ever found.

1 Lingard, History of England, vol. viii. pp. 220, 221; and Appendix, pp. 436, 437.

2 "Je *pense* de v'ray que c'est la lettre escripte par sa Majeste a Babington, *comme il me souvenit.*—Ainsi signè.

"NAU."

"Telle *ou semblable me* semble avoir este la reponse escripte en François par Monsr. Nau, laquelle j'ay traduit, et mis en chifre, comme j'en fais mention au pied d'une copie de lettre de Mr Babington, laquelle Monsr. Nau a signè le premier.—Ainsi signè.

"GILBERT CURLE."

"5th September 1586."

we were able of ourselves to charge him withal.

"If it might please her majesty, upon Curle's plain dealing, and in respect of the comfort I have put him in to receive grace for the same, to extend some extraordinary favour towards him, considering that he is a stranger, and that which he did was by his mistress's commandment, I conceive great hope there might be things drawn from him worthy of her majesty's knowledge; for which purpose I can be content to retain him still prisoner with me, if her majesty shall allow of it.

"I pray you therefore procure some access unto her majesty, that you may know her pleasure therein, with as convenient speed as you may. And so God keep you. From Barnelme, the 4th September 1586.[1]

"FR. WALSINGHAM."

This letter proves that no minutes in Mary's handwriting, connecting her with the letter to Babington, had then (4th September) been found; that Nau had confessed nothing that implicated her; and that all Walsingham's hopes rested on bribing Curle, by some "extraordinary favour," to make further disclosures.

In these difficulties, it seems to have struck Phelipps, that Curle and Nau might be intimidated into confessing something against Mary, by shewing them that they had already, by their written declarations, confessed enough against themselves to involve a charge of treason, as abettors of the plot for the invasion of England, and the escape of the Scottish queen. The idea of Phelipps was, to say to these secretaries of the Queen of Scots — "We have already enough against you to hang you; but be more explicit: tell us something which may connect your mistress with Babington's designs against Elizabeth's life, and you shall receive 'some extraordinary favour.'" For this purpose Phelipps, on the 4th September, the very day on which Walsingham wrote the above letter, drew up some remarks, which he sent to Burghley, who has endorsed them "From Phelipps." This paper is entitled, "An Extract of the points contained in the minutes written by Nau and Curle, arguing their privity to the enterprise of the Catholics, and their mistress's plot,"—4th September 1586. The reader must pardon its abrupt and unfinished state, remembering that this makes it more authentic. It has been carefully read and marked by Burghley, and is as follows:—

"Nau and Curle are charged to be privy and partakers of the conspiracy made by the Papists for the invasion and a rebellion within the realm; as also of a plot laid by their mistress, and sent by her unto the said Papists, with direction for execution of their enterprise, by the minutes of the letters sent to divers persons following, which they have confessed to be their own hands:—

"*Nau.* K. The letter K, written from the Scottish Q. to Charles Paget, 27th July, being Nau his hand, hath these express words beginning at the letter K, *Sur le retour de Hallard, &c.* In English thus:—'Upon the return of Ballard into this country, the principal Catholics which had despatched him unto that side for want of intelligence with me, have imparted unto me their intentions conform to that which you wrote thereof; but more particularly demanding my directions for the execution of the whole. I have made them a very ample despatch, containing point by point my advice touching all things requisite, as well on this side the sea as on that, to bring to pass their design,' &c.

"The same written in English by Curle, the letter marked D.

"*Nau.* L. The letter marked L, written from the Scottish Q. to the B. of Glasgow, 27th July, being Nau his hand, containeth a direction unto the said B. to renew the practices with the King of Spain and the Pope, for reformation (as she terms it) of this island —an advice to raise some contrary faction in Scotland to that of England, to disturb the quiet of this isle — she assureth that the principal Catholics of England were never better disposed than at this present, being resolute to set upon the rest. Wills him to know of her cousin the D. of Guise, if, the peace being made in France, he may not employ himself in this action with the forces which, without suspicion, he may have in readiness by that mean, &c.

"F. The letter F, written by the Scottish queen to Mendoza, 27th July, being Nau his hand, containeth, in express terms, that upon intelligence of

[1] MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Papers of Mary Queen of Scots.

the K. of Spain's good intention in these quarters, she hath written very amply to the principal Catholics, touching a design which he hath sent them, with his advice upon every point, to resolve upon the execution thereof. And particularly that she hath sent unto them to despatch one in all diligence unto him, sufficiently instructed to treat with him according to the general offers that had been made him of all things to be required on the behalf of his master. She wills him to give the bearer credit, which shall be sent from the Catholics, as to herself. The said deputy of the Catholics, she saith, shall inform him of the means of her escape, &c.

"*Curle.*[1] O. The letter marked O, written by the Q. of Scots to the L. Paget, 27th July, with Curle's hand, argueth an overture made by the Catholics of this realm to the Spanish ambassador, Mendoza, which she says she thinks his brother hath acquainted him with: she saith she hath written very amply to the principal of the said Catholics, for to have, upon a plot which she hath dressed for them, their common resolution; and for to treat accordingly with the K. of Spain, she hath addressed them unto him; and she prays him to consider deeply of the said plot, and all the particularities for the execution thereof—namely, for the support, both men, armour, munition, and money, which is to be had of the Pope, and King of Spain.

"There is a minute of the same in French, under Nau his hand.

"*Curle.*[1] E. The letter marked E, written by the Scottish Q. to Sir Francis Englefield, 27th July, of Curle's hand, containeth the same in effect also."[2]

In the above summary of proofs against the Queen of Scots and her two secretaries, drawn up by Phelipps, and evidently founded on *all* the original letters which had been then recovered, and with which either Nau or Curle could be connected, there is not, it will be seen, the slightest proof of Mary's participation in Babington's plot against Elizabeth's life: nor does there appear to have been anything in these letters, written by her secretaries, connecting her or them with such a design. The plot related entirely, as is shewn by these proofs, to the Spanish invasion of England, and the plans drawn up by Mary for her escape, to which she pleaded guilty.

This defect appears to have struck Burghley, and Phelipps endeavoured to supply it by drawing up for this statesman a second SUMMARY, endorsed by Burghley, "*From Phelipps,*" and dated on the same day as the former, 4th Sept. 1586. This paper appears to me, from its admissions and omissions, to be almost conclusive in establishing the innocence of Mary. It is entitled, "Arguments of Nau and Curle's privity to the whole conspiracy, as well of invasion as rebellion, and murder of the queen's person," and is as follows:—

"Their privity to that was written by their mistress touching the two former points both to Mendoza, the L. Paget, Charles Paget, Sir Francis Englefield, and the B. of Glasgow, in the letters of the 27th July, thus marked—F, O, K, D, E, L; which minutes are of their own hands, as themselves confess, *the like trust not unlike to be given for writing those to Babington.*

"The first letter written by that queen unto Babington, as it seemeth, since his intelligence was renewed, being of the 26th June, is of Curle's hand, (litera B;) and the secret intelligencer, Barnaby,[3] is directed by Curle's letter where to find Babington, litera B.

"The second letter, likewise coming from Nau to Babington, touching their assurance of Poley, is of Curle's hand, (litera P;) and it argueth a letter sent in cipher from Babington, which Curle, or the inditer thereof, was to decipher, which was Nau. In the same letter Curle taketh order that)-(shall stand for Babington's name.

"Litera A sheweth that there was another letter in cipher sent to Babington by the secret messenger, 27th July, which Babington shall confess to be the bloody letter. The letters to Babington, and from Babington, two of them were very long, and all in cipher, fair written, (as Babington will confess;) and therefore it cannot choose but that the queen's letter was put in cipher by Nau or Curle, and Babington's letter likewise deciphered.

[1] This word, Curle, on the margin, is in Burghley's hand.

[2] MS., State-paper Office, Papers of Mary Queen of Scots.

[3] Barnaby is a name for Gilbert Gifford. "Curle's Letter," 19th June; State-paper Office, in which he says "*f* stands also for Barnaby, or Gilbert Gifford."

"The new alphabet sent to be used in time to come between that queen and Babington, accompanying the bloody despatch, is of Nau's hand.

"*The heads of that bloody letter sent to Babington, touching the designment of the queen's person,* [by this he means the plot to assassinate Elizabeth,] *is of Nau's hand likewise.*

"They cannot any way say it should stand with reason that the queen did decipher, and put in cipher, her letters herself: for it appeareth that she despatched ordinarily more packets every fortnight than it was possible for one body well exercised therein to put in cipher, and decipher those sent; much less for her, being diseased, a queen, &c.

"It appeareth all letters were addressed to one of them, Nau or Curle; for that in the deciphering there is, for the most part, a postscript found to them—excusing sometimes the error or length of the cipher, sometimes of their private occasions," &c.

Such is this second "Summary." Now it will be noted that Phelipps argues thus: The letters of Mary to Mendoza, Lord Paget, and others, marked F, O, K, D, E, L, were written from minutes drawn up by Curle and Nau from Mary's dictation. It is, therefore, to be presumed that a similar trust would be given them for writing the letters to Babington. Is there not here an express admission by Phelipps, that there was no proof that Mary had given any instructions whatever to her secretaries, which connected her with the alleged letter to Babington produced on her trial.—He presumes that she may have given instructions for Babington's letter, because she gave such instructions for the letters to Mendoza, Paget, and the rest.

But there is a still more important fact stated by Phelipps in this second "Summary." The *heads* of the bloody letter to Babington had, it appears, been found, although the *minutes* of this same letter, which Nau affirmed to have been given him by the queen in her own handwriting, had not been found. And these heads, let it be observed, were in the handwriting of Nau himself, not of Mary.

It is therefore evident that the utmost exertions, and the strictest search on the part of Mary's enemies, directed by all the skill and vigour of Walsingham, and carried into effect by the unscrupulous artifices and ingenuity of Phelipps, had not been able to find the smallest scrap of evidence under Mary's hand which could connect her with the plot against Queen Elizabeth's life. Last of all, we have in this "*Summary,*" the admission that *all* the letters (which includes Babington's among the rest) were addressed, not to Mary, but either to Nau or Curle—that Mary relied on Nau and Curle to decipher them—and that the queen's alleged letter to Babington was put in cipher either by Nau or Curle. If, then, (to sum up these proofs,) Babington's alleged letter was not addressed to Mary—if she had nothing to do with deciphering it—if the alleged answer in cipher was not made by her—if there were no minutes in her hand for that answer—if Nau and Curle's declarations do not connect her with the plot against the queen's life—and if Phelipps, whose evidence under such a lack of proof could alone have supplied the deficiency, was not brought forward—it appears difficult to resist the conclusion, that Mary was implicated solely in a plot for her escape, that she was entirely ignorant of the project for Elizabeth's assassination, and that she was the victim of forged letters manufactured by her enemies.[1] It would be easy to corroborate this conclusion by some additional arguments, drawn from the successive declarations of Nau, and other letters or papers preserved in the British Museum and State-paper Office: but enough has been said upon the point; and any reader who wishes to pursue the inquiry, will find ample materials in these two noble repositories of original information. He will there find the lists, notes, and arguments which Lord Burghley drew up previous to the trial of the Scottish queen—upon which I cannot enter; but the whole have been examined and carefully weighed, and the result is, a confirmation of the opinion of Mary's innocence.

[1] In the British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 458, there is a confession of Thomas Harrison, who styles himself Secretary to Sir Francis Walsingham, in which he states that Walsingham, Phelipps, and himself contrived the conspiracy, and forged the letters, for which Mary suffered death. I have not given this confession, because I know one part of it to be false, and dare not trust the rest.

No. XV., page 155.

Queen Mary's Beads.

My friend, Mr Howard of Corby castle, has in his possession a pair of golden beads, with a gold crucifix attached to them, ornamented with drop pearls. These beads belonged to the late Charles, duke of Norfolk, and were part of the collection of Thomas, earl of Arundel: the tradition in that noble family being, that they were worn by the unfortunate Mary at the time of her death, and sent by her, as a last token of affection, to the then Earl or Countess of Arundel.

No. XVI., page 169.

Huntly's Rebellion with Errol, Angus, and Bothwell.

On the 16th March 1588-9, Elizabeth sent the following private letter to James, remonstrating with him against his misplaced lenity to Huntly and the Catholic faction. It was delivered to the king by the English resident Ashby, on the 21st March, as we learn by the following passage from that gentleman's letter to Lord Burghley[1]:—

"The 21, early in the morning, I received a letter from your Honour, with the enclosed of her majesty's; which I presented to him that day." Ashby afterwards tells us the king liked the queen's letter, and meant to prosecute the matter against the Catholic lords with severity. As to the Spaniards, against whose stay in Scotland Elizabeth so proudly remonstrated, calling them "the spoils of her wreck," the same gentleman writes Burghley, "that it is thought as many as a thousand are dispersed over Scotland; and how they are to be transported, unless her majesty go to charges, he cannot tell." This fact is new.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES.[2]

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I am driven, through the greatness of my care for your safe estate, to complain to yourself of yourself; wondering not a little what injurious planet against my nearest neighbours reigneth with such blindness, and suffereth them not to see their changing peril and most imminent danger. Shall I excuse them they know it not? I am too true a witness that ignorance cannot excuse, as having been a most near spy to find out those treacheries. Must I say they dare not? Far be it from kingly magnanimity to harbour within their breast so unseemly a guest. Have I no excuse to serve them for payment? Well, then must I wail that I cannot mend; and if there befall them mishap, I am not guilty of such disaster. Yet can I not desist, though I might be discouraged, to beseech you in God's name not to overstep such happy occasions as it hath pleased God to reveal unto you: for if, when they be at your side, you will not make yourself a profit of their wreck, how will you catch them when they are aloof from you?

"Let too late examples shew you for pattern, how dishonourable it is to prolong to do by right, that [which] after they are driven to do by extremity; yea, and perchance as being taught to take heed, they will shun the place of danger; and so your danger worse than the others.

"It had been for honour and surety never to have touched, than so slightly to keep them in a scorn in durance, to be honoured with your presence with all kindness, and soon after to be extolled to your dearest chamber. Good Lord! what uncouth and never-heard-of trade is that? You must pardon my plain dealing: for if my love were not greater than my cause, as you treat it, I should content myself to see them wrecked with dishonour that contemn all loving warning and sister-like counsel. I pray God there be left you time (you have dealt so untimely) to be able to apprehend and touch such as dares boldly, through your sufferance, attempt anything they list, to bring you and your land to the slavery of such as never yet spared their own. I know not how gracious they will be to you and your realm. When they get footing, they will suffer few feet but their own. Awake, therefore, dear brother, out of your long slumber! and deal like a king who will ever reign alone in his own. If they found you stout, you should not lack that would follow you, and leave rotten posts.

"I marvel at the store you make of the Spaniards being the spoils of my wreck. You wrote me word not one should bide with you; and now they must attend for more company. I am sorry to see how small regard you have of so great a cause. I may claim by treaty that such should not be; but I

[1] State-Paper Office.

[2] Warrender MSS., vol. A, p. 196.

hope, without such claim, (seeing your home practices,) you will quickly rid your realm of them with speed; which I do expect for your own sake, and not the least for mine; of whom you may make sure reckoning (if you abandon not yourself) to be protected by for ever.

"And thus I end with axing a right interpretation of my plain and sincere meaning; and wish ever to you as to myself; as knoweth the Lord, whom ever I beseech to preserve you with long and happy days. xvi. Martii, 1588. "ELIZABETH R."

Endorsed, Copie of a letter from the Queen, 1588.

No. XVII., page 177.

It appears by a letter of Mr R. Bowes, the English ambassador at the Scottish court, to Lord Burghley, dated at Edinburgh, 4th June 1590, that on the 3d June he received the following letter of Elizabeth to James, and presented it next day (the 4th) to the King of Scots. "He received," says Bowes, "her majesty's letter very friendly; shewing himself much pleased and comforted therewith." The person against whom Elizabeth had remonstrated, deprecating his being sent on so weighty and confidential a business, was Colonel Stewart, whom she suspected, on account of his former desertion of the Protestant party.

QUEEN ELIZABETH TO KING JAMES.[1]

"My conceit, I perceive, my dear brother, hath no whit swerved from your good intent: for now I well see Colonel Steward's negotiation was not framed of his own brain, but proceeded from your earnest affection to so laudable a cause; and by your last letters, I find your earnest motion made to the two dukes, together with their good and loving consent.

"All this moveth me to find you a redevable[2] prince to a careful friend; and [I] do praise my judgment to have chosen so grateful a king, on whom to spend so many careful thoughts, as since your peregrination I have felt for your surety and your land's wealth: and as my thanks are manifold, so shall the memorial bide perpetual.

"And for the Action, at the arrival of such a one as you are sending me, I will at large impart plainly my resolution therein; and considering it not your least regard of me, that you be heedful to deal no other ways than as may best content me. And [I] do assure you, that as I will never myself enter into it the first, yet I will ask nothing that shall not fit a king to demand, nor plead more innocency in all the cause, than my guiltless conscience, well shewed by my actions, shall ever testify. And so you may be assured to get most honour, and never blot your fame with dealing in an action, when so great injury shall appear, and no just cause to enforce it.

"That I perceive the governors of Denmark like well that other princes of Germany should send their good consent, with joining their message, I must needs say, 'the more the better' that desire such thing as is best for all Christendom; although I had thought that you, with the King of Denmark, would have sufficed. Yet, if the rest do make the knot the greater, I must think my bond to them the more, and trust the pact will be the surer.

"In the choice of such as you mind to send, this I hope you will chiefly regard: that he be none such as whose own cause or affection to the adverse part may breed a doubt of performance of the sender's will; but be chosen even such a one, as whose honest and wise endeavour may much advance the end of so good a beginning.

"My good brother, I write this the plainer that you might clearly see what one I wish, and that may suffice for all. And for that the time requireth speed, I doubt not but you will use it.

"And so I leave scribbling, but never end to love you, and assist you with my friendship, care, and prayer to the living God to send you all prosperous success, and His Holy Spirit for guide.

"Your most assured faithful Sister and Cousin."

Endorsed, 29th May 1590. Copy of her majesty's letter, written with her own hand to the King of Scots, sent to Mr Bowes.

No. XVIII.

The following letter, written by Elizabeth to Henry the Fourth, at the time that she sent her favourite Essex with four thousand men to his assistance, is highly characteristic. It is taken from a contemporary copy preserved in the

[1] MS., State-paper Office, Royal Letters, May 29, 1590.

[2] "Redevable," Fr., beholden to; grateful.

Collection of Royal Letters in the State-paper Office. See Camden's Elizabeth, in Kennet, vol. ii. pp. 562, 563.

ELIZABETH TO HENRY IV., July 27, 1591.

"Selon la promesse que toujours je garderay endroit, très cher frere, je vous mande l'aide de 4000 hommes, avec un Lieutenant qui comme il m'appertient de bien près, aussy est-il de telle qualité, et tient tel lieu chez moy, que de coustume ne se souloit esloigner q'avec nous. Mais toutes ces raisons j'ay oublié les proposant toutes a votre occasion, preferant vostre necessité et désir, à mes particulières considerations. A laquelle cause je ne doute nullement que vous y respondiez, avec un honorable et soigneux respect de vostre grandeur, a luy faire l'accueil et regard que tant d'amitié merite: vous pouvant assurer, que si (que plus je craigne) la temerité que sa jeunesse luy donne, ne se fait trop se precipiter, vous n'aurez jamais cause de doubter de la hardiesse de son service, car il n'a fait que trop souvent preuve qu'il ne craint hazard quelque qui soit. Et vous suppliant d'en avoir plus-tost de respect, qu'il est trop effroné q'on luy donne la bride.

"Mais, mon Dieu, comment reve-je, pour vous faire si deraisonnable requeste, que vous voyant tant tarder à vous conserver la vie, je fus si mal appris de respecter une plus simple creature. Seulement je vous prononce qu'il aura plus besoin de bride que d'esperon. Et non obstant j'espère que vous le trouverez assez habile pour conduire ses troupes à vous faire service tres agreable. Et j'ose promettre, que nos sujects y sont de s'y bonne dispositions et ont les cœurs si vaillants qu'ils vous feront services qui vous ruineront beaucoup le'ennemy si leur bonne fortune respondra à leurs desirs. Et pour salaire de toutes ces Compagnies je vous demande ces deux requestes: la premiere, que leur vie et sang vous soyent si à cœur que rien soit omis pour leur regard ainsi qu'ils soyent cheris comme qui servent, non comme mercenaires, mais franchement, de bonne affection. Aussi qu'ils ne portent le faits de trop violents hazards n'y de nre [n'etre] bien au double accompagnés et secondés. Vous etes si sage Prince, que m'assure que n'oubliez que nos deux nations n'ont trop souvent si bien accordés, qu'ils ne se souviennent de vielles descordances, ne se pensent de même terre, mais separés d'une profonde fossée. Et pourtant y tiendrez sy bien la main, que nul inconvenient leur arrive. Ayant de ma part bien instruits nos gens d'assez bonnes leçons, lesquelles je m'assure qu'ils observeront. Et pour ne vous fatiguer de longue lettre, je finiray cet adresse, le seul memorial qu'en vous approchant près de nos quartiers, vous n'oublier de boucher chemin a Parma, de toutes parts au il doit entrer. Car je m'assuere, qu'il à receu commandement d'omettre plustot les pays-bas que la France.

"Vostre très asseurée bonne sœur et cousine, "E. R."

No. XIX.

The following striking and characteristic letter of Elizabeth to the Scottish king, written with her own hand, was received by Bowes, accompanied by two letters of the 14th and 17th of the same month, from Lord Burghley. James was then at Dumbarton, in progress, whither the English ambassador proceeded; and (as he informs the lord treasurer in his letter from Edinburgh, dated 27th August,) "delivered her majesty's letter, accompanying the delivery thereof with report of your lordship's opinion in the weighty contents flowing suddenly from her majesty's pen in your lordship's sight." "The king," continues Bowes, "oftentimes perused and gravely noted the frame and substance of this letter; and with pleasant countenance and signs, well declaring his good acceptance, he entered into right high commendation of the excellent order, singular wisdom, and rare friendship that he found therein."

QUEEN ELIZABETH TO THE KING OF SCOTS, August 12, 1591.

"Many make the argument of their letters of divers subjects: some with salutations; some with admonitions; others with thanks: but, my dear brother, few, I suppose, with confession; and that at this time shall serve the meetest for my part.

"I doubt not but you wonder why it is, that in time so perilous to your person, so dangerous for your state, so hateful to the hearers, so strange for the treasons, you find me, that from your birth held most in regard your surety, should now neglect all, when it most behoveth to have watchful eyes on

a most needy prince. Now hear thereof my shrift:—It is true that my many counsels I have known oft thanked, but seldom followed. When I wished you reign, you suffered other rule: if I desired awe, you gave them liberty. My timely warnings became too late performance. When it required action, it was all to begin; which when I gathered, as in a handful of my memory, I will now try, quoth I, what, at a pinch, he will do for himself; for nearer than with life may no man be assailed. And hearing how audacity prevailed in so large measure, as it was made a question whether a witch for a king's life might serve for a sufficient proof, and that the price of a king's blood was set at so low a rate, with many wondering blessings I, in attentive sort, attended the issue of such an error; and not seeing any great offence laid to so slight a case, I fearfully doubted the consequence of such an act; yea, when I heard that, quakingly, men hasted to trial of such guilt, I supposed the more loved where least it became, and the most neglected to whom they owed most bond.

"Well [I] was assured, that more addition could never my warning make; and to renew what so oft was told, should be but *petitio principii*. With safe conscience having discharged my office, I betook you to your best actions, and thought for me there was no more remaining. And now I trust that this may merit an absolution, I will make you partaker of my joy, that I hear you now begin (which would to God had sooner been!) to regard your surety, and make men fear you, and leave adoring false saints. God strengthen your kingly heart, and make you never fail yourself; for then who will stick to you? You know me so well as no bloody mind ever lodged in my breast: and hate bear I none to any of yours, God is witness. But ere your days be shortened, let all yours be. This my charity."

Royal Letters, State-paper Office, August 12, 1591. Endorsed, Copy of her Majesty's letter to the K. of Scots. Written with her H. hand.

No. XX.

This indignant and characteristic letter of Elizabeth was written to express her deep resentment of the manner in which Henry had treated her auxiliary force sent under the command of Essex. Camden, p. 563.

ELIZABETH TO HENRY IV., November 9, 1591.

"Ma plume, ne toucha jamais papior, qui se fits sujet à argument si éstrange, pour monstrer ung nouvel accident d'une mal injuriée amitié, par tel a qui le seul appuy, a estre ministré par la partie la plus offensée. De nos ennemis, nous n'attendions que tout malencontre: Et si aultant nous prestent les amis, qu'ell difference en trouvons nous? Je m'estonne, qu'il est possible que celuy qui tient tant de besoing d'aide, paye en si mauvaise monnoye ses plus asseurés. Pouvez vous imaginer, que mon sexe m'aridit le courage pour ne me ressentir d'ung public affront. Le sang royal, si j'en ay, ne l'endureroit du plus puissant Prince en la Chretienneté, tel traistement, qu'en ces trois mois vous m'avez prestê. Ne vous desplaisse que je vous dise rondement, que si ainsi vous traister vos amis, qui librement de bonne effects vous servent en temps le plus important, vous en faillerez doresnavant, en vos plus grands besoings. Et j'eusse presentement revoqué mes troupes n'eust été que votre ruine me semble se présenter, si par mon exemple les aultres, doubtants de semblable traitement, vous delaissent. Ce qui me pour quelque peu de tems [fait] prolonger leur demeure, me rougissant que je suis faicts spectacle du monde de Princesse meprisée, Priant le Createur vous inspirer meilleur mode de conserver vos amis.

"Vtre sœur qui plus merite qu'elle n'a,

"E. R."

No. XXI.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, November 25, 1591.

"As my care for your weal, my dear brother, hath been full long the desire of my endeavours, so though my many letters do not oft cumber your eyes with the reading them, yet my ever-living watchful head hath never been neglected; as by proof, even now, the errand that this bearer brings you, may make you know; which being even that nearly doth touch your surety and state, I conjure you, even for the worth that you prize yourself at, that you

forslowe[1] not (after your usual manner) this matter, as you too much, ere now, have done suchlike: and ever remember, that the next step to overturn a royal seat, is to make the subject know, that whatever he doth may be either coloured or neglected; of which either breeds boldness to shun the pain, whatsoever the offence deserves. Far better it were, that all pretence of cause be bebarred, than threaten, ere one strike and so the prey escape. Shun in the handling of my overture [speaking] of what is meant; but after wise resolution of what behoves, let few or, if possible, none know, afore that be ended which is thought to be done. This is, in short, my advice; as she that too plainly sees, that if you defer, you may fortune repent. Yea, and you trust too much some, that can have many cords to their bow; these may, perhaps, overthrow the mark, or you hit the blank. Excuse my plainness, and let good-will plead my pardon. God bless you.

"Yo' most assured Sister,
"ELIZABETH R."

Royal Letters, State-paper Office. Endorsed, November 25, 1591. Copie of her Ma^ties^ Lre to the K. of Scots, by Mr Hudson.

XXII.

A short sentence of the following letter from Elizabeth to James has been already given in the text, (p. 188;) but the whole epistle, which is preserved in Sir George Warrender's MSS., and written wholly in the queen's own hand, is too characteristic to be omitted. I have, generally, in Queen Elizabeth's letters, modernised the spelling; this, for the reader's amusement, I give in her own peculiar orthography:—

QUEEN ELIZABETH TO KING JAMES, December 4, 1592.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—If the misfortune of the messenger had not protracted so longe the riciate of my lettars, I had sonar receved the knowlege of such matter, as wold have cried my sonar answer to causes of suche importance; but at length, thoght longe:

"First, I perceave how to the privy snaris of your seeming friends, yow have so warily cast your yees as that your [mind] hath not been trapped with the fals shewis of such a kindness; but have wel remembred, that proved cares and assured love aught, of mere justice, tafe [to have] the upperhand of begiling debaits and coulored treasons.

"Yow forget not, I percaive, how yow should have served ons [once] for prey to enter the hands of a foreaner's rule, even by the intisement of him, that offars you that he cannot get; wiche if he ever [got] should serve *his* trofe, not *yours*, whose land he seakes but to thrale both. Hit glads me much, that yow have more larger sight than the [they] supposed that wold have limed you so. And for my part, I rendar my many thankis to your selfe for your selfe, as she that skornis his malice, and eanvies not his intent.

"My enemy can never do himself more skar, than to wil my giltles wrack, who or now, himself knowes, hath preserved him his cuntryes, who since hath sought mine. Suche was his reward. God ever shild you from so crouked a wil as to hazard your own, in hope of saiving another.

"You know right wel, ther is a way to get, that doth precede the attempt. Whan he hath won the entry, you shal have lest part of the victory, who sekes to make (as oft hath bin) your subjects theirs. Suppose, I beseeche you, how easely he wyl present yow the best, and kepe the worst for him. This matter is so plain, hit nedes smal advis.

"Preserve yourselfe in such state as you have. For others begile not your selfe, that injuriously you may get. There is more to do in that than *wilcs and wiches*. Look about with fixed yees, and sure suche to yow, as sekes not more yours than you. Draw not such as hange their hopes on other stringes than you may tune. Them that gold can corrupt, thinke not your gifts can assure. Who ons have made shipwrack of ther country, let them never injoy hit. Wede out the wedes, lest the best corn festar. Never arm with powere suche whos bettarnis must folowe *after* you; nor trust not to ther trust, that, undar any coular, wyl tral [thrall] their own soile.

"I may not, nor wol conciel, overturs that of late hath ful amply bene made me, how you may playnly knowe all the combinars aganst your state; and how yow may intrap them, and so assure your kingdem; but . . . . . not presenting [permitting] hit a spoile to st . . . . . courtsy, one or more of

[1] To forslowe; to omit, or lose by deferring.

ther owne—is this actor, and therefore [know you] best in whiche he standeth to your[1] . . . . . Wither if this be, he may desarve surty of life, or of land, nor livehode; but suche as may praserve brethe to spend whan best shal please you.[2] My answer was, whan I se the way how, I wil impart hit to whom hit most apartanis.

"Now bethink, my deare brother, what furdar yow wyl have me do. In meanwhile, beware to give the raines into the hands of any, lest hit be to late to revoke suche actions done. Let no one of the Spanishe faction in your absence, yea, whan you were present, receave strengt or countenance. Yow knowe, but for you, al of them to be alike to me for my particular; yet I may not deny but I abhorre suche as sets their country to sale. And thus comitting yow to God's tuition, I shal remain the faithful holdar of my vowed amitie without spot or wrinkel.

"Your affectionat Sistar and Cousin,

"ELIZABETH."

This letter is directed "To our dearest Brother the King of Scots." It is endorsed in a small hand of the time, "Delivered be Mr Bowes, 4th Decem. 1592." See Historie of James the Sext, p. 261.

No. XXIII., p. 191.

The Present State of the Nobility in Scotland. July 1, 1592.[3]

Earls.	*Surnames.*	*Religion.*	*Ages.*
Duke of Lennox	Stewart	Prot.	Of 20 years. His mother, a Frenchwoman. Married the third daughter of the late Earl of Gowrie. She is dead. His house, castle of Methven.
Arran	Hamilton	Prot.	Of about 54 years. His mother, Douglas, daughter to the Earl of Morton, who was earl before James the Regent. His house, Hamilton; and married this Lord Glames' aunt.
Angus	Douglas	Doubtful 1	Of 42 years. His mother, Graham, daughter to the Laird of Morphy. Married the eldest daughter of the Lord Oliphant. His house, Tantallon.
Huntly	Seton-Gordon	Papist	Of 33 years. His mother, daughter to Duke Hamilton. Married the now Duke of Lennox's sister. His house, Strabogy.
Argile	Campbell	Young	Of 17 years. His mother, sister to the Earl Marshall, this earl's father. Not yet married. His house, Dynoon.
Athol	Stewart	Prot.	Of 32 years. His mother, daughter to the Lord Fleming. Married this Earl of Gowrie's sister. His house, Dunkeld.
Murray	Stewart	Young 2	Of 10 years. His mother, daughter to the Earl of Murray, Regent, by whom this earl's father (slain by Huntly) had that earldom. Not married. His house, Tarnaway.
Crawford	Lindsay	Papist 3	Of 35 years. His mother, daughter to the Earl Marshall. Married first the Lord Drummond's daughter, and now the Earl of Athol's sister. His house, Finhaven.
Arrol	Hay	Papist	Of 31 years. His mother, Keith, daughter to the Earl Marshall. Married first the Regent Murray's daughter, next Athol's sister, and now hath to wife Morton's daughter. His house, Slanes.

[1] The original is here torn and illegible.
[2] This sentence is evidently imperfect; but so it runs in the original.
[3] MS., State-paper Office. There is also a copy in British Museum, Caligula, D. II. 80.

Earls.	*Surnames.*	*Religion.*	*Ages.*
Morton	Douglas	Prot.	Of 66 years. His mother, Erskine, daughter of the Lord Erskine. Married to the sister of the Earl of Rothes. His house, Dalkeith.
Marshall	Keith	Prot.	Of 38 years. His mother, daughter to the Earl of Errol. Married this Lord Hume's sister. His house, Dunotter.
Cassillis	Kennedy	Young	Of 17 years. His mother, Lyon, aunt to this Lord Glames, and who now is the Lord John Hamilton's wife. Not married.
Eglinton	Montgomery	Young	Of 8 years. His mother, Kennedy, daughter to the Laird of Barganie. Unmarried.
Glencairn	Cunningham	Prot.	Of 40 years. His mother, Gordon of Lochinvar. Married the Laird of Glenurchy's daughter, Gordon. His house, Glencairn.
Montrose	Graham	Papist	Of 49 years. His mother, daughter of the Lord Fleming. Married the Lord Drummond's sister. Auld Montrose, in Angus.
Menteith	Graham	Young	Of 19 years. His mother, daughter to the old Laird of Drumlanrig. Married to Glenurchy's daughter. Kylbride.
Rothes	Lesly	Prot.	Of 65 years. His mother, Somerville. Married first the sister of Sir James Hamilton, and then the sister of the Lord Ruthven. Castle of Lesly.
Caithness	Sincler	Neut.	Of 26 years. His mother, Hepburn, sister to Bothwell that died in Denmark. Married this Huntly's sister. Tungesbey.
Sutherland	Gordon	Neut.	Of 36 years. His mother, sister to the Regent Earl of Lennox. Married the Earl of Huntly's sister, this earl's aunt. His house, Dunrobyn.
Bothwell	Stewart	Prot.	Of 30 years. His mother, Hepburn, sister to the late Earl Bothwell. Married the sister of Archibald Earl of Angus. He stands now forfeited. Crighton.
Buchan	Douglas	Young	Of 11 years. His mother, Stewart, heretrix of Buchan. Unmarried.
Mar	Erskine	Prot.	Of 32 years. His mother, Murray, sister to the Laird of Tullybarden. A widower. His house, Alloway.
Orkney	Stewart	Neut.	Of 63 years. Base son of King James the Fifth. His mother, Elphingston. Married to the Earl of Cassillis' daughter.
Goury	Ruthven	Young	Of 15 years. His mother, sister to umquhile Lord Methven. Unmarried. Ruthven.

Lords.	*Surnames.*	*Religion.*	*Ages.*
Lyndsay	Lyndsay	Prot.	Of 38 years. His mother, sister to the Laird of Lochleven. Married the Earl of Rothes' daughter. His house, Byers.
Seaton	Seaton	Papist	Of 40 years. His mother, daughter to Sir Wm. Hamilton. His wife is Montgomery, the earl's aunt. His house, Seaton.
Borthwick	Borthwick	Prot.	Of 22 years. His mother, daughter of Buccleuch. His wife, the Lord Yester's daughter. Borthwick.
Yester	Hay	Prot.	Of 28 years. His mother, Car of Fernyhirst. His wife, daughter of the L. of Newbottle.
Levingston	Levingston	Papist	Of 61 years. His mother, daughter of umquhile Earl of Morton. His wife, the Lord Fleming's sister. Calendar.

6 Neidpeth.

Lords.	*Surnames.*	*Religion.*	*Ages.*
Elphinston	Elphinston	Neut.	Of 63 years. His mother, Erskine. His wife, the daughter of Sir John Drummond. Elphinston.
Boyd	Boyd	Prot.	Of 46 years. His mother, Colquhoun. His wife, the Sheriff of Air's daughter. Kilmernok.
Semple	Semple	Prot.	Of 29 years. His mother, Preston. His wife, daughter of the Earl of Eglinton. Sempell.
Ross	Ross	Prot.	Of 30 years. His mother, the Lord Semplis' daughter. His wife, Gavin Hamilton's daughter.
Uchiltree	Stewart	Prot.	Of 32 years. His mother, sister to the Lord Methven. His wife, Kennedy, the daughter of the Laird of Blawquhen. Uchiltree.
Cathcart	Cathcart	Prot.	Of 55 years. His mother, Semple. His wife, Wallace, daughter of the Laird of Cragy-
		7	Wallace. Cathcart.
Maxwell	Maxwell	Papist	Of 41 years. His mother, daughter to the Earl of Morton that preceded the Regent. His
		8	wife, Douglas, sister to the Earl of Angus.
Harris	Maxwell	Papist	Of 37 years. His mother, Harris, by whom he had the lordship. His wife is the sister of
		9	Newbottle. His house, Terregles.
Sanquhar	Crichton	Papist	Of 24 years. His mother, daughter of Drumlanrig. Unmarried. His house, Sanquhar.
Somervill	Somervill	Prot.	Of 45 years. His mother, sister to Sir James Hamilton. His wife, sister to the Lord Seaton. Carnwath.
Drummond	Drummond	Prot.	Of 40 years. His mother, daughter to the Lord Ruthven. His wife, Lyndsay, daughter of the Laird of Edzell. Drummond.
Oliphant	Oliphant	Prot.	Of 65 years. His mother, Sandielands. His
		10	wife is Errol's sister. Duppline.
Gray	Gray	Papist	Of 54 years. His mother, the Lord Ogilvy's daughter. His wife, the Lord Ruthven's sister. Fowlis.
Glames	Lyon	Young	Of 17 years. His mother, sister to the Lord
		11	Saltoun. Unmarried.
Ogilvy	Ogilvy	Papist	Of 51 years. His mother, Campbell of Caddell. His wife, the Lord Forbes's daughter. No castle, but the B. of Brichen's house.
Hume	Hume	Suspect	Of 27 years. His mother, the L. Gray's daughter. His wife, the Earl of Morton's daugh-
		12	ter. Hume.
Fleming	Fleming	Papist	Of 25 years. His mother, daughter of the Master of Ross. His wife, the Earl of Montrose's daughter. Bigger.
Innermeith	Stewart	Prot.	Of 30 years. His mother, the Lord Ogilvy's daughter. His wife, Lyndsay the Laird of Edzell's daughter. Redcastle.
Forbes	Forbes	Prot.	Of 75 years. His mother, Lundie. His wife, Keith.
Salton	Abernethy	Young	Of 14 years. His mother, Athol's sister, this earl's aunt. Saltoun.
Lovat	Fraser	Prot.	Of 23 years. His mother, Stewart, aunt to Athol. His wife, the Laird of M'Kenzie's daughter.
Sinkler	Sinkler	Prot.	Of 65 years. His mother, Oliphant. His wife, the Lord Forbes's daughter. Ravens-Crage.
Torpichen	Sandilands	Young	Of 18 years. His mother, daughter of the Lord Ross. His house, Calder or Torpichen.

Lords.	*Surnames.*	*Religion.*	*Ages.*
Thirlstane	Maitland	Prot.	Of 48 years. Married the Lord Fleming's aunt. A new house in Lowther or Lethington.

HOUSES DECAYED.

Methven	Stewart	Decayed by want of heirs; and coming to the King's hands, he hath disponed it to the Duke.
Carlisle	Carlisle	The male heirs are decayed. There is a daughter of the Lord Carlisle's married to James Douglas of the Parkhead, who hath the living, but not the honours.

LORDS OR BARONS CREATED OF LANDS APPERTAINING TO BISHOPRICS AND ABBACIES.

Lords.	*Surnames.*	*Religion.*	*Ages.*
Altrie	Keith	Prot.	Of 63 years. His mother, Keith. His wife, Lauriston. This lordship is founded on the Abbot of Dere.
Newbottle	Kerr	Prot.	Of 39 years. His mother, the Earl of Rothes' sister. His wife, Maxwell [sister] to this Lord Harris. This lordship is founded on the Abbacy of Newbottle. His house, Morphale or Preston-Grange.
Urquhart	Seaton	13 Papist	Of 35 years. The Lord Seaton's brother. His wife, the Lord Drummond's daughter. Founded on the Priory of Pluscardy.
Spinay	Lyndsay	Prot.	Of 28 years. The Earl of Crawford's third brother. His wife, Lyon, the Lord Glamis' daughter. This is founded on the Bishopric of Murray. His house is Spynay. But Huntly is heritable constable in that house.

Endorsed, "Of the Nobility in Scotland." Burghley, who had studied the paper, and marked the names of the Papists, has added, in his own hand, "A Catalogue," the date 1^mo^ Julii 1592; the figures over the Papists' names are also in Burghley's hand.

No. XXIV.

The following letter is taken from the original in the Warrender MSS., written entirely in the queen's own hand:—

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, [probably 1593.]

"When I consider, right dear Brother, that all the chaos whereof this world was made, consisted first of confusion, and was after divided into four principal elements, of which if either do bear too great a superiority, the whole must quickly perish; and when I see that all our beings consist of contrarieties, without the which we may not breathe, I marvel the less that there do fall in your conceit, an opinion, that you could *accord* with a *discord*. It is true that, in music, sweet disorders be good rules; but in trades of lives, which bide not for moments but for years, it seld is taken for good advice: the more, I grant, is their bond, that on so dangerous foundation find a builder to venture his work.

"I will shun to be so wicked, as to turn to scorn that I suppose is grounded on ignorance; neither will I misjudge that any derision is meant, where I hope there reigns no such iniquity: therefore, I will have recourse to my best judgment, which consisteth in this thought, —that some that saw my outward show, looked not on the calends of my years; and so, through fame of seeming appearance, might delude your ears, and make suppose far better than you should find. But as my obligation is so great in your behalf, as it may permit no disguising, no more than in anything else that may concern you will I abuse you

with beguiling persuasions; and thereon mind to deal with you as merchants that have no ready money: then they fall to consider of those wares that suits best their countries, and by interchange of equal utilities, makes traffic to other's best avail; procuring a continuance of friendly trade, and true intelligence, of fair good-will; which is the way I choose to walk in, and even in so smooth a path as my works shall perform my word's errand: and do promise, on the faith of a king, if I find correspondence in your actions, my eyes shall give as narrow a look to what shall be your good, as if it touched the body that bears them. But if I shall find a double face of one shoulder, I protest I shall abandon my care, and leave you to your worst fortune.

"This gentleman, for your allowance and good favour, not for his good-will to me, nor many practices perilous to me, of which, if he list he may speak, I admit to my presence; whom, I assure you, I find even such as fits the judgment of your place, to esteem with no temporary honour. You may believe my judgment, that have had no cause to give him a partial censure. I perceive that God bestowed His gifts on him with no sparing hand; but even with his dole was amply enlarged.[1] But, above all, I commend his faith to you; for whom, I see, he neglects and loseth his greatest hopes ere now, and in all your requests rather overcarries it, as though nothing must be denied your request.

"And for that part of his charge, that toucheth my particular, though at your commandment he followeth your laws, yet found I my want such, as are far short from such an election as your choice should make you, where both youth and beauty should accompany each other; of which, though either fail, yet let not such defects make diminution of my friendship's price, which I trust to make of so true a value, that no touchstone shall try any mixture in that compound, but such as fears not trial.

"To conclude: this bearer hath well satisfied my expectation, as one that ought to make some amends for former wrongs,—to [whom] I have bequeathed the trust to lay open unto you my griefs and injuries, which, through lewd advice, you have wrought; though, I trust, coming amends may easily blot out of my memory's books. This I bequeath to the safe keeping of God; who give some wisdom to sever a sincere advice from a fradulent counsel, and bless you from betraying snares, who takes the feet oft of the hare!

"Your assured careful Sister and Cousin,

"ELIZABETH R."[2]

[1] So in the original; but I cannot make out the sense.

No. XXV.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, June 1594, page 218.

The following letter of Elizabeth to James was sent immediately previous to the baptism of Prince Henry:—

"MY GOOD BROTHER,—You have so well repaired the hard lines of menacing speech, that I like much better the gloss than the text; and do assure you that the last far graceth you better, and fitteth best our two amities. You may make sure account, that what counsel, advice, or mislike, my writing can make you, receiveth ever ground of what is best for you, though my interest be least in them. And, therefore, having so good foundation, I hope you will make your profit of my plainness; and remember that others may have many ends in their advices, and I but you for principal of mine.

"I render you many thanks, for bond of firm and constant amity, with most assurance of never entering with my foes in treaty or good-will, until constraint of my behalf cause the breach. It pleaseth me well that this addition may assure me a perpetuity; for never shall my act deserve so foul an imputation. But I muse what such an Horace his but should need to me,[3] whose solid deeds have never merited such a halfed suspicion. Put out of your breast, therefore, my sincere heart intreats you, so unfit a thought for a royal mind; and set in such place the unfeigned love that my deserts have craved, and make a great distance betwixt others not tried, and mine so long approved.

[2] This letter is not dated, and is therefore placed at the end of the correspondence; but it appears to have been sent at the time when James was (as Elizabeth thought) acting with inconsistent lenity to Huntly and the Catholics, probably sometime in September 1593. See p. 206.

[3] So in the original; but the sense I cannot make out.

"It gladdeth me much, that you now have falsified such bruits as forepast deeds have bred you: for tongues of men are never bridled by kings' greatness, but by their goodness; nor is it enough to say they will do well, when present acts gainsay their belief.

"We princes are set on highest stage, where looks of all beholders verdict our works; neither can we easily dance in nets, so thick as may dim their sight. Such, therefore, our works should be, as may praise our Maker and grace ourselves: among the which I trust you will make one whose facts shall tend to strengthen yourself, whoso you feeble, and count it best spent time to govern your own and not be tutored. And since no government lasts, where duly pain and grace be not inflicted where best they be deserved, I hope no depending humours of partial respects shall banish from you that right. And as you have, I may so justly say, almost alone, stood princely to your own estate, without prizing others' lewdness, that scarcely could afford a grant to a true request, or a yea to well-tried crimes, so I beseech you comfort yourself with this laud, that so much the more shineth your clearness through the foil of dim clouds, as their spot will hardly be blotted out, when your glory remains. And by this dealing, you shall ever so bind me to be your faithful watch, and stanch sister, that nothing shall I hope pass my knowledge, that any way may touch you, but I will both warn and ward in such sort, as your surety shall be respected, and your state held up, as God, that best is witness, knoweth; whom ever I implore to counsel you the best, and preserve your days.

"Your affectionate Sister and Cousin,

"E. R.

"Such remembrance of my affection as I send, take in good part, as being, such my affairs as now they be, more than millions sent from a richer prince, and fraughted with fewer foes; which I doubt not but in wisdom you can consider, and as, in some part, I have at length dilated to this gent."

Royal Letters, State-paper Office. Endorsed, June 1594, M. of her Ma^ts L^re w^th her owne hand to the K. of Scotts.

No. XXVI., page 245.

Kinmont Willie.

Lord Scrope, on the morning after the enterprise, wrote both to the privy-council of England and to Lord Burghley, entreating them to move the queen to insist on the instant delivery of Buccleuch, to be punished for this proud attempt, as he deserved. In his letter to the privy-council, he thus describes the enterprise:[1]—

"Yesternight, in the dead time thereof, Walter Scott of Hardinge,[2] and Walter Scott of Goldylands, the chief men about Buclughe, accompanied with 500 horsemen of Buclughe and Kinmont's friends, did come, armed and appointed with gavlocks and crows of iron, hand-picks, axes, and scaling-ladders, unto an outward corner of the base court of this castle, and to the postern-door of the same; which they undermined speedily and quickly, and made themselves possessors of the base court; brake into the chamber where Will of Kinmont was; carried him away; and in their discovery by the watch, left for dead two of the watchmen; hurt a servant of mine, one of Kinmont's keepers; and were issued again out of the postern, before they were descried by the watch of the inner ward, and ere resistance could be made.

"The watch, as it should seem, by reason of the stormy night, were either on sleep, or gotten under some covert to defend themselves from the violence of the weather, by means whereof the Scots achieved their enterprise with less difficulty. . . . If Buclughe himself have been thereat in person, the captain of this proud attempt, as some of my servants tell me they heard his name called upon, (the truth whereof I shall shortly advertise,) then I humbly beseech, that her majesty may be pleased to send unto the king, to call for, and effectually to press his delivery, that he may receive punishment as her majesty shall find that the quality of his offence shall demerit; for it will be a dangerous example to leave this high attempt unpunished. Assuring your lordships, that

[1] State-paper Office, Border Correspondence, Lord Scrope to the Council, April 13, 1596.

[2] Walter Scott of Harden, who, under Buccleuch himself, seems to have been the principal leader in this daring and successful enterprise, was the direct ancestor of the present Lord Polwarth.

if her majesty will give me leave, it shall cost me both life and living, rather than such an indignity to her highness, and contempt to myself, shall be tolerated. In revenge whereof, I intend that something shall be shortly enterprised against the principals in this action, for repair thereof, if I be not countermanded by her majesty."

"These names were taken by the informer at the mouth of one that was in person at the enforcing of this castle, the 13th April 1596 :—

The Laird of Buclughe.
Walter Scot of Goldielands.
Walter Scot of Hardinge.
Walter Scot of Branxholme.
——— Scot named Todrigge.
Will. Ellott, Goodman of Gorrombye.
John Ellott, called of the Copshawe.
The Laird of Mangerton.
The young Laird of Whithaugh, and his sonne.
Three of the Calfhills, Jocke, Bighams, and one Ally, a bastard.
Sandy Armstronge, sonne to Hebbye.
Kinmont's Jocke, Francie, Geordy, and Sandy, all brethren, the sounes of Kinmont.
Willie Bell, redcloake, and two of his brethren.
Walter Bell of Godesby.
Three brethren of Twada Armstrong's.
Young John of the Hollace, and one of his brethren.
Christy of Barneglish, and Roby of the Langholm.
The Chingles?
Willie Kange, and his brethrene, with their complices.

"The informer saith, that Buclughe was the fifth man which entered the castle; and encouraged his company with these words—'Stand to it; for I have vowed to God and my prince, that I would fetch out of England, Kinmont, dead or quick; and will maintain that action when it is done, with fire and sword.'"

The date on the back, April 13, is in the handwriting of Lord Burghley.[1]

No. XXVII.

The following spirited and indignant letter of Elizabeth to James, was written soon after the release of Kinmont Will by Buccleuch :—

[1] MS., State-paper Office, April 13, 1596. Border Correspondence.

Elizabeth to James, April 1596, page 245.[2]

"I am to speak with what argument my letters should be fraught, since such themes be given me, as I am loath to find, and am slow to recite. Yet, since I needs must treat of [them] and unwillingly receive, I cannot pretermit to set afore you a too rare example of a seduced king by evil information.

"Was it ever seen, that a prince from his cradle, preserved from the slaughter, held up in royal dignity, conserved from many treasons, maintained in all sorts of kindness, should remunerate, with so hard measure, such dear deserts, with doubt to yield in just treaties response to a lawful friend's demand? Ought it to be put to a question, whether a king should do another his like, the right? Or should a council be demanded *their* good pleasure what *he himself* should do? Were it in the nonage of a prince, it might have some colour; but in a Father-age, it seemeth strange, and, I daresay, without example. I am sorry for the cause that constrains this speech, especially in so apert a matter, whose root grows far, and is of that nature that it (I fear me) will more harm the wronger than the wronged; for how like regard soever be held of me, yet I should grieve too much to see you neglect yourself, whose honour is touched in such degree, as that our English, whose regard, I doubt not, you have in some esteem, for other good thoughts of you, will measure your love by your deeds, not your words in your paper.

"Wherefore, for fine, let this suffice you, that I am as evil treated by my named *friend* as I could be by my known *foe*. Shall any castle or habytacle of mine be assailed by a night larcin, and shall not my confederate send the offender to his due punishment? Shall a friend stick at that demand that he ought rather to prevent? The law of kingly love would have said, nay: and not for persuasion of such as never can or will stead you, but dishonour you to keep their own rule, lay behind you such due regard of me, and in it of yourself, who, as long as you use this trade, will be thought not of yourself ought, but of conventions what they will. For, commissioners I will never grant, for an act that he cannot

[2] MS. Royal Letters, Scotland. State-paper Office.

deny that made; for what so the cause be made, no cause should have done that. And when you with a better-weighed judgment shall consider, I am assured my answer shall be more honourable and just; which I expect with more speed, as well for you as for myself.

"For other doubtful and litigious causes in our Border, I will be ready to point commissioners, if I shall find you needful; but for this matter of so villanous a usage, assure you I will never be so answered, as hearers shall need. In this and many other matters, I require your trust to our ambassador, which faithfully will return them to me. Praying God for your safe keeping.

"Your faithful and loving Sister,
"E. R."

Endorsed, Copie of her Maj. Letter to the King of Scots, of her own hand.

No. XXVIII., page 245.

After Kinmont Will's Rescue and Deliverance by Buccleuch, 1596.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—That I see a king more considerate of what becometh him in the behalf of his like, than counsellors, that never being of such like estate, can hardlier judge what were fittest done, I marvel no more than I am glad to find yourself as greatest, so worthier of judgment, than such as, if they were as they ought, you need not have had the glory of so honourable a fact alone. But you have made me see that you can prize what were meetest, and deem how short of that they shewed, who have displayed their neglect, in leaving you destitute of good advice, by their backwardness in that was their duty. And I hope it will make you look with a broad sight on such advisers, and will warn you by this example not to concur with such deceitful counsel, but will cause you either to mind their custom, or to get you such as be better minded, than to hazard you the loss of your most affectionate, in following their unseemly advice.

"For the punishment given to the offender, I render you many thanks; though I must confess, that without he be rendered to ourself, or to our warden, we have not that we ought. And, therefore, I beseech you consider the greatness of my dishonour, and measure his just delivery accordingly. Deal in this case like a king, that will have all this realm and others adjoining see how justly and kindly you both will and can use a prince of my quality; and let not any dare persuade more for him than you shall think fit, whom it becomes to be echoes to your actions, no judgers of what beseems you.

"For Border matters, they are so shameful and inhuman as it would loathe a king's heart to think of them. I have borne for your quiet, too long, even murders committed by the hands of your own wardens; which, if they be true, as I fear they be, I hope they shall well pay for such demerits, and you will never endure such barbarous acts to be unrevenged.

"I will not molest you with other particularities; but will assure myself that you will not easily be persuaded to overslip such enormities, and will give both favourable ear to our ambassador, and speedy redress, with due correction for such demeanour. Never think them meet to rule, that guides without rule.

"Of me make this account, that in your world shall never be found a more sincere affection, nor purer from guile, nor fuller fraught with truer sincerity, than mine; which will not harbour in my breast a wicked conceit of you, without such great cause were given, as you yourself could hardly deny; of which we may speed, I hope, *ad calendas Græcas*.

"I render millions of thanks for such advertisements as this bearer brought from you; and see by that, you both weigh me and yourself in a right balance; for who seeks to supplant one, looks next for the other. This paper I end with my prayers for your safety, as desireth

"Your most affectionate Sister,
"ELIZ. R."

Royal Letters, State-paper Office. Endorsed, Copie of her Mat^{s} Lre to the K. of Scotts, of hir own hand, for Mr Bowes.

No. XXIX., page 265.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, July 1, 1598.

On the Subject of Valentine Thomas.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Suppose not that my silence hath had any other root than hating to make an argument of my writing to you, that should mo-

lest you, or trouble me; being most desirous that no mention might once be made of so villanous an act, specially that might but in word touch a sacred person; but now I see that so lavishly it hath been used by the author thereof, that I can refrain no longer to make you partaker thereof sincerely, from the beginning to this hour, of all that hath proceeded; and for more speed have sent charge with Bowes, to utter all, without fraud or guile, assuring you that few things have displeased me more since our first amities; and charge you in God's name to believe, that I am not of so viperous a nature, to suppose or have thereof a thought against you, but shall make the deviser have his desert, more for that than ought else; referring myself to the true trust of this gent, to whom I beseech you give full affiance in all he shall assure you on my behalf. And so God I beseech to prosper you with all His graces, as doth desire,

"Your most affectionate Sister,

"E. R."

Royal Letters, State-paper Office. Endorsed, 1598. Pr^mo. July, Coppie of her Ma^ts. Lre to the Kinge of Scots, w^t her owne hande, concerninge Val. Thomas.

No. XXX., page 302.

The following letter was sent by the Earl of Mar, and the Abbot of Kinloss:—

JAMES TO ELIZABETH, February 10, 1601.

"MADAM AND DEAREST SISTER,—As the strait bonds of our so-long-continued amity do oblige me, so your daily example used towards me, in the like case, does invite me, not to suffer any misconstrued thoughts against any of your actions to take harbour in my heart; but by laying open all my griefs before you, to seek from yourself the right remedy and cure for the same.

"And since that I have oft found by experience, that evil-affected or unfit instruments employed betwixt us, have oftentimes been the cause of great misunderstanding amongst us, I have, therefore, at this time, made choice of sending unto you this nobleman, the Earl of Mar, in respect of his known honesty and constant affection to the continuance of our amity; together with his colleague the Abbot of Kinloss, (a gentleman whose uprightness and honesty is well known unto you;) that by the labours of such honest and well-affected ministers, all scruples or griefs may on either side be removed, and our constant amity more and more be confirmed and made sound.

"Assuring myself, that my ever honest behaviour towards you shall at least procure that justice at your hands, to try or[1] ye trust any unjust imputations spread of me, and not to wrong yourself in wronging your best friend; but in repect of the faithfulness of the bearers, I will remit all particulars to their relation; who, as they are directed to deal with you in all honest plainness, (the undisseverable companion of true friendship,) so do I heartily pray you to hear and trust them in all things as it were myself, and to give them a favourable ear and answer, as shall ever be deserved at your hands by

"Your most loving and affectionate Brother and Cousin,

"JAMES R."[2]

"From Holyrood House, the 10th February 1601."

No. XXXI., page 302.

The following letter from the English queen, is an answer to the former letter of James to Elizabeth, sent by his ambassadors, the Earl of Mar and the Abbot of Kinloss.—See this volume, p. 302.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, May 1601.

"MY GOOD BROTHER,—At the first reading of your letter, albeit I wondered much what springs your griefs might have of many of my actions, who knows myself most clear of any just cause to breed you any annoy; yet I was well lightened of my marvel when you dealt so kindly with me not to let them harbour in your breast, but were content to send me so well a chosen couple,[3] that might utter and receive what you mean, and what I should relate.

"And when my greedy will to know, did stir me at first access to require an ease, with speed, of such matters, I found by them that the principal causes,

[1] Or; ere.

[2] Wholly in James's hand. Royal Letters, State-paper Office, sealed with the king's signet ring.

[3] The Earl of Mar and the Abbot of Kinloss.

were the selfsame in part, that the Lord of Kinloss had, two years past and more, imparted to me: to whom and to other your ministers I am sure I have given so good satisfaction in honour and reason, as, if your other greater matters have not made them forgotten, you yourself will not deny them.

"But not willing in my letter to molest you with that which they will not fail but tell you, (as I hope,) together with such true and guileless profession of my sincere affection to you, as you shall never have just reason to doubt my clearness in your behalf; yet this I must tell you—that as I marvel much to have such a subject that would impart so great a cause to you, afore ever making me privy thereof, so doth my affectionate amity to you claim at your hands that my ignorance of subjects' boldness be not augmented by your silence; by whom you may be sure you shall never obtain so much good, as my good dealing can afford you.

"Let not shades deceive you, which may take away best substance from you, when they can turn but to dust or smoke. An upright demeanour bears ever more poise than all disguised shows of good can do. Remember that a bird of the air, if no other instrument, to an honest king, shall stand in stead of many feigned practices, to utter aught may anywise touch him. And so leaving my scribbles, with my best wishes that you scan what works becometh best a king, and what in end will best avail him.

"Your most loving Sister, that longs to see you deal as kindly as I mean,

"ELIZABETH R."

Royal Letters, State-paper Office. Endorsed, Copie of her Mat^ty^ Letter to the King of Scots, written with her own hand.

No. XXXII., page 306.

The following letter was entirely written in the queen's own hand, and sent to the king by the Duke of Lennox:—

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, December 2, 1601.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Never was there yet Prince nor meaner wight, to whose grateful turns I did not correspond, in keeping them in memory, to their avail and my own honour; so trust I, that you will not doubt but that your last letters by Fowles and the duke are so acceptably taken, as my thanks can not be lacking for the same, but yields them you in thankful sort. And albeit I suppose I shall not need to trouble any of your subjects in my service, yet, according to your request, I shall use the liberty of your noble offer, if it shall be requisite.

"And whereas your faithful and dear duke hath at large discoursed with me, as of his own knowledge, what faithful affection you bear me, and hath added the leave he hath received from you, to proffer himself for the performer of my service in Ireland, with any such as best may please me under his charge, I think myself greatly indebted to you for your so tender care of my prosperity; and have told him that I would be loath to venture his person in so perilous service, since I see he is such one that you make so great a reckoning of; but that some of meaner quality, of whom there were less loss, might in that case be ventured.

"And sure, dear brother, in my judgment, for the short acquaintance that I have had with him, you do not prize with better cause any near unto you: for I protest, without feigning or doubling, I never gave ears to greater laud, than such as I have heard him pronounce of you, with humble desire that I would banish from my mind any evil opinion or doubt of your sincerity to me. And because though I know it was but duty, yet where such show appears in mindful place, I hold it worthy regard; and am not so wicked to conceal it from you, that you may thank yourself for such a choice. And thus much shall suffice for fear to molest your eyes with my scribbling: committing you to the enjoying of best thoughts, and good consideration of your careful friend, which I suppose to be,

"Yo^r^ most aff. Sister,

"ELIZABETH R."

Royal Letters, State-paper Office. Endorsed, 2d December 1601. Cop. of her Ma^ts^ Lre to the King of Scot. by the Duke of Lennox.

No. XXXIII., page 311.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, July 4, 1602.

"MY GOOD BROTHER,—Who longest draws the thread of life, and views the strange accidents that time makes, doth not find out a rarer gift than thankfulness is, that is most precious and sel-

domest found; which makes me well gladded, that you methinks begin to feel how necessary a treasure this is, to be employed where best it is deserved; as may appear in those lines that your last letters express, in which your thanks be great for the sundry cares that of your state and honour my dear friendship hath afforded you; being ever ready to give you ever such subjects for your writing, and think myself happy when either my warnings or counsel may in fittest time avail you.

"Whereas it hath pleased you to impart the offer that the French king hath made you, with a desire of secrecy: believe, that request includes a trust that never shall deceive: for though many exceed me in many things, yet I dare profess that I can ever keep taciturnity for myself and my friends. *My head may fail, but my tongue shall never;* as I will not say but yourself can in yourself, though not to me witness. But of that no more: *preterierunt illi dies.*

"Now to the French: in plain dealing, without fraud or guile, if he will do as he pretends, you shall be more beholden to him than he is to himself, who within one year hath winked at such injuries and affronts, as, ere I would have endured that am of the weakest sex, I should condemn *my* judgment: I will not enter into *his.* And, therefore, if his *verba* come *ad actionem,* I more shall wonder than do suspect; but if you will needs have my single advice, try him if he continue in that mind. And as I know that you would none of such a League, as myself should not be one, so do I see, by his overture, than himself doth: or if, for my assistance, you should have need of all help, he would give it: so, as since he hath so good consideration of me, you will allow him therein, and doubt nothing but that he will have me willingly for company; for as I may not forget how their league with Scotland was reciproke when we had wars with them, so is it good reason that our friendships should be mutual.

"Now, to confess my kind taking of all your loving offers, and vows of most assured oaths, that naught shall be concealed from me, that either prince or subject shall, to your knowledge, work against me or my estate—surely, dear brother, you right me much if so you do. And this I vow, that without you list, I will not willingly call you in question for such warnings, if the greatness of the cause may not compel me thereunto. And do intreat you to think that if any accident so befall you, as either secrecy or speed shall be necessary, suppose yourself to be sure of such a one as shall neglect neither, to perform so good a work. Let others promise, and I will do as much with truth as others with wiles. And thus I leave to molest your eyes with my scribbling; with my perpetual prayers for your good estate, as desireth your most

"Loving and affectionate Sister,

"ELIZABETH R."

"As for your good considerations of Border causes, I answer them by my agent, and infinitely thank you therefor."

Royal Letters, State-paper Office. Endorsed, 4th July 1602. Copie of her Ma^ties Lre to the King of Scotts, sent by Mr Roger Ashton.

INDEX.

A

Abbey Church of Dunfermline, Bruce buried in, i. 160.
Abbot of Unreason, iii. 76.
Abelard, i. 289.
Aberbrothock, Scottish nobility assemble in parliament 1320 at, i. 140, 250, 251.
Abercorn, siege of the castle of, i. 65, ii. 164.
Abercromby, the historian, ii. 186, 241.
Abercromby, David, ii. 235.
Aberdeen, burgesses of, hanged by Wallace, i. 56; the citizens of, storm the castle, 65 *n.*, 103.
Aberdeen, becomes surety for the ransom of James I., ii. 49.
Aberdeenshire, fisheries of, ii. 36.
Abergavenny, Earl of, iv. 137.
Abergeldie, Gordon of, iv. 223.
Abernethy, Sir Lawrence, pursues Edward II., i. 121, 183.
Abernethy, Sir William, slain at Harlaw, ii. 41.
Abingdon, one of the Babington conspiracy, iv. 116.
Aboyne, i. 37.
Absenteeism, law against, ii. 73.
Accession of Edward I. to the throne of England, i. 20.
Achendown, iii. 166.
Achinross, John, iv. 235, 236, 241.
Acquitaine, Edward I. a vassal of the King of France for the duchy of, i. 41.
Acre, John of, i. 7.
Aga Mohammed Khan, advice of, to his minister, i. 158.
Agincourt, ii. 115.
Agmondesham, Walter, appointed assistant to Alan, bishop of Caithness, i. 33.
Agnadillo, battle of, ii. 279.
Agriculture, i. 239-241, 351, ii. 15.
Ailsa, the island of, iv. 260.
Aird, a Scottish preacher, iv. 262.
Aitken, a supposed sorceress, iv. 266.
Alan, lord of Galloway, i. 9.
Alan, bishop of Scotland, appointed chancellor, i. 33.
Alanson, Ewen, ii. 312.
Albany, Regent, earl of Fife, i. 344; invades England, 345; is appointed governor of Scotland, 350; created duke, ii. 6; marches to the relief of Edinburgh, 13; his designs against the Duke of Rothesay, 21; starves him to death, 22; his defence, 22; prepares to invade England, 29; treacherous negotiations with Henry IV., 33; is declared regent, 35; his hatred of the Lollards, 37; negotiations for the ransom of his son, 43; and the detention of James I., 44; dies at Stirling, 47.
Albany, Murdoch Stewart, duke of, taken prisoner at the battle of Homildon Hill, ii. 25, 27, 30, 33, 42; is relieved from captivity, 45; succeeds to the regency, 47; his incompetency, 47, 48; resigns the government to James I., 50; is arrested, condemned, and executed, 59.
Albany, Alexander, duke of, son of James II., ii. 187; warden of the marches, 213; suspected of designs against the crown, 214; confined, 214; escapes to France, 215; offers to swear fealty to Edward IV. for the crown of Scotland, 219; invades Scotland, is restored to his former dignities, 223; is created lord-lieutenant, 224; his treaty with England, 225; acknowledges his treason, and is pardoned, 226; again is guilty of treason, 227; invades Scotland, 228; his death, 228.
Albany, Duke of, ii. 283, 296, 298, 299, 300; is made regent, 301-309, 315, 317-329, 331-333, 354.
Albany, Arthur, duke of, his birth, ii. 365; his death, 370.
Albemarle, Earl of, i. 7.
Albert, Archduke, iv. 308.
Aldan, i. 255.
Alexander II., who married to, i. 1 *n.*; Henry III. claims to be his lord paramount, 2; refuses to acknowledge the claim, 2, 352 *n.*; prepares to resist invasion, 2; is beloved by the English nobility, 3; accepts a truce which is followed by peace, 3; consents to maintain fidelity to Henry, 3; agrees to the marriage of his son with the daughter of Henry, 3.
Alexander III.; his accession to the throne, i. 1; is crowned at Scone, 1; singular incident on the occasion, 4; his minority, 1; is married to Margaret, daughter of Henry III. of England, 4; refuses to pay homage, as King of Scotland, to Henry III., 4; returns to Scotland with his queen, 6; slight and inaccurate knowledge possessed of his

reign, 6 *n.* ; is with his queen entertained at London, &c., by the English king, 7; is carried off to Stirling by the Comyn party, 7, 353 *n.*; receives from Henry III. an invitation to visit the English court, which he accepts, 9 ; returns to Scotland, 9 ; receives a deputation from Haco, king of Norway, 13 ; sends envoys, and proposes conditions to Haco, 13 ; precautions taken by him to repel the Norwegian invasion, 14 ; encounters and defeats the Norwegians at Largs, 15 ; on the same day receives intelligence of the death of Haco, and the birth of a son, 18 ; subjugates the Isle of Man and the Western Isles, 18 ; resists the pretensions of the Pope's legate to levy tribute in Scotland, 19 ; is present at the coronation of Edward I., 20 ; does homage, by proxy, to Edward I. for his English possessions, 21 ; death of his queen, 21 ; marries Joleta, daughter of the Count de Dreux, 22 ; celebration of the nuptials at Jedburgh, 22 ; a strange masque, 22 ; is killed near Inverkeithing, 22 ; his character and personal appearance, 23 ; condition of the country at this period, 23.

Alexander, Aless, canon of St Andrews, ii. 355.

Alexander, lord of Badenoch, i. 328.

Alexander, prince of Scotland, married to the daughter of the Earl of Flanders, i. 22 ; his death, 22.

Alexander, son of James I., born, ii. 78.

Alexandria, i. 43.

Allan, a bondsman, i. 253.

Alloa, castle of, ii. 136.

Almondbridge, iii. 247.

Alnwick castle, siege of, i. 154, iii. 315.

Alnwick, William, i. 49.

Alonzo, king of Castile, i. 162.

Alva, Duke of, iii. 213, 293, 315, 322, 333, 345, 363.

Amiens, Bishop of, iii. 120, 122, 136.

Amiens, treaty of, i. 73, 75.

Ancrum, iii. 29.

Anderson, a Protestant martyr, iii. 21.

Andrews, a Flemish astrologer, ii. 214.

Angus, lord of Islay, submits to Haco, king of Norway, i. 12.

Angus, Earl of, treachery of, i. 62.

Angus of Moray, ii. 70.

Angus, Earl of, ii. 158 ; is granted the lordship of Douglas, 173, 185 ; promised an English dukedom, 192 ; rescues an English garrison, 193 ; his death, 193.

Angus, Thomas, earl, one of the hostages for David II., i. 207 ; instigates the murder of Catherine Mortimer, is imprisoned, and dies, 208.

Angus, Archibald, earl of, surnamed "Bell the Cat," ii. 214 ; organises a conspiracy against James III., 220 ; undertakes to bell the cat, 221 ; seizes Cochrane, the favourite of the king, and hangs him, 222 ; confines the king in Edinburgh castle, 222 ; his intrigues with England, 222 ; is deprived of his offices, 226 ; offended at James IV., he concludes a treaty with England, 254 ; is deprived of some of his possessions, 254 ; his advice to the king at Flodden, 291.

Angus, Earl of, ii. 296, 297 ; marries the widow of James IV., 298-303, 305-307, 310, 311, 313, 314, 316, 317, 319-321, 328, 331-334, 334 *n.* ; gets possession of the king, 337-339, 341, 343, 345, 347 ; flies to England, 348, 348 *n.*, 368 ; restored to his possessions, iii. 4, 14, 14 *n.* ; binds himself to co-operate with the English monarch for the subjugation of his own country, 17 ; his treachery, 20 ; deserts the English, 24 ; is created lieutenant-general, 25 ; his treason leads to the rout of the Scots, 27 ; his neutrality, 28 ; his hereditary property given to an English knight, 28 ; defeats the English at Ancrum, 30 ; resigns his lieutenancy, 31 ; conspires against the life of Beaton, 32 ; evades his engagements with the English court, 36 ; at the battle of Pinkie, 60-62.

Angus, Earl of, iv. 7, 15 ; proclaimed lieutenant-general, 17, 20, 25, 32, 34 ; joins the plot against Lennox, 35, 39, 66, 68, 70, 72, 78 ; attempt to assassinate, 91, 102, 103, 105, 147, 187, 188, 190.

Angus, son of the Lord of the Isles, ii. 192.

Anjou, Louis of, dauphin of France, ii. 63, 64, 85, 140.

Annabella, Princess, sister of James II., ii. 172.

Annan, Baliol, surprised at i. 169 ; burnt and destroyed, 57.

Annandale, its mountain fastnesses, i. 176.

Annandale, ravaged by Wallace, i. 56 ; invaded by Edward I., 85.

Annandale, Robert de Bruce, lord of, opposes the claims of Margaret of Norway, i. 25 ; sent to treat with Edward I., 26 ; his ambitious schemes, 30 ; appeals to Edward, 34 ; acknowledges Edward I. as lord paramount, 34 ; takes the oath of homage to Edward, 34 ; the descent through which he claims the crown, 34 ; his claims considered, 36 ; his claims set aside, 37 ; claims a part of the kingdom, 37 ; his estates forfeited, 41 ; joins Wallace, 57 ; refuses to do homage to Baliol, 84.

Anne, Lady, niece of King of England, ii. 229.

Anne, Princess, of Denmark, iv. 170 ; gives birth to a son, 215, 227, 300.

Annibal, one of Queen Mary's suite, iv. 155.

Ansley, a tavern-keeper, iii. 245, 246.

Anstruther, iii. 96.

Apelles, ii. 243.

Appleby, sacked by the Scots, i. 125.

Arbroath, Abbot of, iii. 67.

Archery encouraged by James I., ii. 56.

Ardgowan, Stewart of, ii. 314.

Ardincapel, Macaulay of, iv. 229.

Ardnamurchan, M'Ian of, ii. 313.

Ardrossan, Sir Fergus of,

Argentine, Sir Giles de, accompanies Edward II. a short way from Bannockburn, i. 121 ; is slain at Bannockburn, 121.

Argyle, Angus of, i. 10.

Argyle, John of, receives flattering letters from Edward II., i. 109 ; aids the English with his fleet, 114.

Argyle, Earl of, ii. 228, 235, 236, 245, 293.

Argyle, Earl of, ii. 310, 313, 325, 328, 337, 351.

Argyle, Earl of, one of the council of regency, iii. 4-6 ; the plunder of his territory, 21, 26 ; rewarded for his loyalty, 37 ; at the battle of Pinkie, 60 ; accepts a bribe from the English, 65 ; encourages the Protestant movement, 86, 93, 94, 96, 97, 201-205, 223, 230 ; con-

spires against Darnley, 236, 239, 240; deserts the confederate lords, 260, 261, 266; makes his submission to the Regent Moray, 278, 284, 293, 307-309, 324, 325, 332, 340, 342, 357, iv. 9; joins with Earl of Athole against Regent Morton, 10; the regent's cupidity the cause of quarrel, 11; visits James VI. at Stirling castle, and complains of Morton's oppressive conduct, 12-14; is overreached by Morton, 15; refuses to attend a convention of nobles summoned by the king, 15; declines to attend a parliament held in Stirling castle, 16; marches against Morton, 17; at the intercession of the English ambassador agrees to peace, 17; made member of the privy-council, 17, 23, 25, 27, 34, 42, 47; joins against Gowrie, 66.
Argyle, Countess of, iii. 220, 231.
Argyle, Archibald, earl of, prepares to attack the Popish rebels, iv. 221; is attacked near Glenlivat, 223; battle of, 224; is defeated, 224, 225, 228; discovers a plot against his life, 229; proclaims a war of extermination against Earl of Huntly, 229, 230, 236, 241; reconciliation with Earl of Huntly, 310.
Arkinholme, battle of, ii. 164, 164 *n.*, 165.
Armada, the, iv. 166, 168, 173.
Armagh, Archbishop of, iii. 71, 71 *n.*
Armour, the, of Earl of Douglas, ii. 25.
Armstrongs, a Border clan, ii. 275, 338, 340.
Armstrong, Gilbert, a parliamentary commissioner, i. 211.
Armstrong, Hecky, a Border thief, iii. 317.
Armstrong, Johnnie, hanged, ii. 349.
Armstrong, Sandie, iv. 244.
Armstrong, William, of Kinmont, iv. 243; his sons, 243, 244, 245.
Arran, the island of, given to Thomas Bisset, by Edward I., i. 65.
Arran, Sir Thomas Boyd, afterwards earl of, married to Princess Mary, ii. 199; created Earl of Arran, 199; sent ambassador to Denmark, 200, 201; informed of the animosity of King James against him, he escapes to Denmark, 202; takes service under Charles the Bold of Burgundy, 204; returns to Scotland, 297; Earl of Home is committed to his charge, 305; joins with the Earl of Angus, and then deserts him, 306; rebels again, and is pardoned, 308; Provost of Edinburgh, 315, 323, 329-333, 336, 337, 339, 340.
Arran, Earl, son of the Duke of Chastelherault, iii. 107, 109, 110, 112, 114, 116, 132, 133; becomes insane, 161, iv. 20, 21.
Arran, James Stewart, earl of, son of Lord Ochiltree, his education, iv. 30; a soldier of fortune, 30; conspires against Morton, 31; accuses him of the murder of Darnley, 31; is commissioned to bring Morton to Edinburgh, 35; his interview with Morton, 37; obtains an act approving of his conduct in the affair of Morton, 38; seduces the wife of the Earl of March, and marries her, 39, 41, 43, 44; attempts to intimidate the clergy, 46; is made prisoner in Ruthven castle, 49, 52; to gain his liberty, offers to betray Lennox, 53; joins against Gowrie, 60, 66; his opposition to Walsingham, 69; welcomes the young Duke of Lennox, 71; discovers a plot against his life, 72; negotiates with Elizabeth, 73; crushes the conspiracy against him, 74; makes overtures to Elizabeth, 83, 84; meets Lord Hundson on the Borders, 85-90; his arrogance, 90; takes possession of Edinburgh castle, 90; attacks the revenues of the Kirk, 91, 92; his measures against the clergy, 97; implicated in the death of Lord Russell and imprisoned, 101; resumes his intrigues with France, 101; gives protection to Jesuits, 103; breaks ward, rushes to court, and accuses the Master of Gray, 105; the accusation is discredited, and he flies from Stirling, 106; he is proclaimed a traitor, 107; returns to Scotland, 195.
Arran, Countess of, iv. 90, 93.
Arrington, Captain, iii. 352, iv. 21, 22, 25, 41.
Arthur, Prince, ii. 276.
Articles, Lords of the, ii. 51, iii. 9, 127, 132, 219, 280, 280 *n.*
Artisans in the English army, i. 114.
Arundel, Earl, iii. 310, iv. 139.
Arundel, Charles, iv. 114.
Ashby, William, iv. 166, 167, 170, 171.
Ashfield, Sir Edmund, an English gentleman, iv. 273, 299, 300.
Ashton, Mr Roger, iv. 159, 310.
Ashton, Sir Walter, iv. 131, 132.
"Association," the, iv. 40, 41, 55, 93, 113.
Astornish, ii. 191.
Athelstane, charter of King, i. 244.
Athole, Countess of, ii. 192.
Athole, Earl of, taken prisoner by the English and hanged, &c., i. 95.
Athole, Earl of, i. 1 *n.*
Athole, Earl of, his ambition, i. 179; makes his submission to Edward III., 179; appointed governor under Baliol, 179; his cruelty and rapacity, 179; assaults Kildrummie castle and is slain, 180.
Athole, widow of Earl, implores the aid of Edward III., i. 181.
Athole, Walter Stewart, earl of, conspires against James I., ii. 87; execution, 93.
Athole, Earl of, son of Black Knight of Lorn, ii. 192, 223, 236, 239; feudal magnificence of, 253.
Athole, Earl of, iii. 196, 204, 205, 207, 222-224, 241, 254, 269, 325, iv. 9; joins with Earl of Argyle against Morton, 10; suspected by the regent of being a Roman Catholic, 10; complains to the king at Stirling of Morton's tyrannical proceedings, 12, 13; is created chancellor, 13, 14; is overreached by Morton, 15; refuses to attend a convention of nobles summoned by the king, 15; declines to attend a parliament held in Stirling castle, 16; marches against Morton, 17; at the intercession of the English ambassador agrees to peace, 17; made member of the privy-council, 17; corresponds with the Bishop of Ross, 19; dies suddenly under suspicion of being poisoned, 21, 21 *n.*
Athole, Henry, earl of, i. 1.
Athole, Patrick, earl of, murdered, i. 1.
Athole, Thomas, earl of, i. 9.
Athole, Earl of, a crusader, i. 19.
Athole, Earl of, iv. 60, 65, 190, 197, 205, 208, 230.
Aubespine, French ambassador, iv. 146.
Aubigny, Bernard Stewart, lord, ii. 227, 230, 231, 275, 276, 278, 316.

Auchterarder, i. 165.
Audineham, Arnold, a marshal of France, i. 185.
Aumery, a Papal nuncio, i. 131.
Austria, ii. 350.
Auxiliaries, Scottish, in France, ii. 47, 378 *n.*
Avendale, Earl of, ii. 133.
Avondale, ii. 164.
Awe, Loch, i. 105.
Ayr, i. 51, 65.
Ayton, ii. 265.
Ayton, Master of, ii. 374.

B

Babington, Anthony, a Roman Catholic gentleman, iv. 116, 119-121, 121 *n.*, 122, 123, 125-127, 127 *n.*, 129, 131-133.
Bacon, Roger, i. 290.
Bacon, Sir Francis, iv. 265.
Bacon, Sir Nicholas, iii. 299.
Badenoch, Alexander, lord of, i. 213.
Badenoch, ii. 272.
Bagays, castle of, iv. 225.
Baigmont's Roll, i. 20.
Bailleul, castle of, i. 67.
Baird, Sir William, made prisoner by the English, i. 169.
Balcanquel, Walter, a Scottish preacher, iv. 45, 75, 79, 105, 252, 255.
Balfour of Ferney, ii. 334.
Balfour, George, iii. 314.
Balfour, James, president of the Supreme Court, iii. 231.
Balfour, Sir James, ii. 187, iii. 221, 231, 237, 239, 240, 271, 278, 282, 292, 314, 326, 357, 360, iv. 25, 30, 36, 39, 44, 45, 49.
Balfour, Robert, iii. 237, 240.
Balgarnie, Laird of, iv. 252.
Baliol, Alexander, i. 68.
Baliol, John de, at Melrose, i. 7.
Baliol, John, acknowledges the superiority of Edward I., i. 32; his lineage, 34; is crowned at Scone, 38; swears fealty to Edward, 38; insulting language of Edward to, 39; confined by his nobles, 42; renounces his allegiance to England, 44; he quits England, 67; his trunks searched, 67; is conveyed to the castle of Bailleul, 68; his connexion with the royal family of England, 83; dies in exile, 125.
Baliol, Edward, son of John Baliol, delivered up by his father as a hostage to Edward I., i. 45, 83; recalled by Edward II., 146; organises a scheme for the recovery of the Scottish crown, 161; his fleet appears in the Forth, 164; lands at Wester Kinghorn, and advances to Dunfermline, 164; sails for the Tay, 165; encamps near Forteviot, 165; is crowned at Scone, 167; acknowledges Edward III. as his feudal lord, 168; the terms which he proposes, 168; his camp surprised, 169; he escapes to England, 169; is present at the battle of Halidon Hill, 172; takes possession of the throne of Scotland, 174; divides the estates of his opponents amongst his followers, 174; swears fealty to Edward III., 174; excludes the daughters of Lord A. de Mowbray from their possessions, which he awards to Lord John Mowbray, 175; this proceeding causes dissension amongst his English followers, 175; is alarmed and retreats to Berwick, 175; reverses his decision in favour of Mowbray, 175; he flies to England, 177; accompanies Edward III. into Scotland, 176; holds his Christmas festivities at Renfrew, 177; retires to England, 185; re-enters Scotland, 193; resigns his crown, 199; he dies in obscurity, 199.
Baliol, Henry, slain, i. 169.
Baliol, Marjory, i. 83.
Baliol College, Oxford, ii. 43.
Ballard, John, a priest, iv. 115, 116, 119, 120, 122, 129, 130, 132, 134.
Balloch, Donald, ii. 79, 80, 80 *n.*; raid in the west of, 165, 166; rebels against James III., 191, 192.
Balmerino, Lord, iv. 310.
Balmerinoch, Abbot of, i. 48.
Balnamoon, Colessie of, ii. 158.
Balnaves, Secretary, iii. 9, 13, 304.
Balnaves, Henry, iii. 50, 52, 53, 55, 109, 110.
Balquhan, Laird of, iv. 252.
Balvine, a domain of the Douglases, ii. 133.
Balwearie, Scott, laird of, iv. 230.
Balwearie, Laird of, iii. 288.
Bamborough castle, the Regent Moray confined in, i. 179; burnt by Earl of Douglas, ii. 23.
Ban, river, i. 128.
Bandelli, Rocio, iv. 61.
Bannatyne, Richard, iii. 356.
Banners, sacred, of St John of Beverley and St Cuthbert, i. 42.
Bannock, the river, ii. 240.
Bannockburn, battle of, i. 115-123; its consequences, 123.
Barbour, John, archdeacon of Aberdeen, the metrical historian, i. 220.
Barcelona, treaty of, ii. 352.
Bard, Highland, i. 4.
Bard, Peter, an English naval commander, i. 114.
Bardolf, Lord, flies to Scotland, ii. 32.
Barker, a notary, iv. 135.
Barlow, Dr, chaplain to Henry VIII., ii. 355, 356.
Barmoor Wood, ii. 291, 326.
Bartholomew, Roger, a citizen of Berwick, appeals from a judgment of the Scottish regent's to Edward I., i. 39.
Barton, Andrew, ii, 280, 282.
Barton, John, ii. 276, 276 *n.*, 277.
Barton, Robert, ii. 264, 266, 274, 275, 284-286.
Basilicon Doron, the, iv. 272, 309.
Basle, great council of, ii. 82.
Bass Rock, ii. 33.
Baston, a Carmelite friar, is commanded by Bruce to celebrate in verse the victory of Bannockburn, i. 122.
Bavaria, Duke of, iii. 19.
Bavaria, Duke of, iv. 19.
Bayard, Chevalier, ii. 281.
Baynham, iv. 312.
Bayonne, iii. 219.
Beacon fires, ii. 170; iii. 56.
Beal, Mr, a Puritan, iv. 62, 144, 152, 153, 156.
Beans, first introduced into Scotland, ii. 72.
Beards, their fashion in the fourteenth century, i. 187.
Beaton, archbishop of Glasgow, ii. 296, 300, 308, iii. 78, 79.

Beaton, Bishop, iii. 232, 241, 251, iv. 19, 32.
Beaton, Chancellor, ii. 331-334, 337, 339-341, 343.
Beaton, David, (afterwards cardinal,) ii. 360; succeeds to the primacy of St Andrews, 362; begins to persecute the Protestants, 362; intercepted letters of, 364; accompanies James V. on his expedition round Scotland, 365; to divert the attention of the king from the scandalous conduct of the clergy and sympathy with the Reformation, he foments war with England, 369; proceeds on an embassy to Rome, 370; his position at the death of James V., iii. 3; the policy of his faction, 3; produces a will on the death of the king declaring him governor of the realm, 4; the will declared a forgery, 4; is seized and imprisoned, 5; makes his escape, 10; joins with Lennox, 11; organises a strong party in support of national independence, 14; extraordinary story, 15; effects a complete reconciliation with Arran, governor of the kingdom, 17; energetic proceedings against the English party, 19; makes an ecclesiastical progress through the kingdom, 21; offers made to assassinate him, 22, 365 *n.*; has conferred upon him the dignity of Papal legate in Scotland, 31; Henry VIII: encourages plots against his life, 32; he orders the seizure of Wishart, 44; he orders his trial, 43; feelings of rage excited against him by the death of Wishart, 45; his assassination, 46, 47.
Beaton, Mary, iii. 68.
Beaton's Mill, ii. 240 *n.*
Beaton, a retainer of Queen Mary, iii. 197, 213, 220, 286.
Beatrix, Lady, mother of James, ninth earl of Douglas, ii. 159.
Beauchamp, Lord, iv. 314.
Beaufort, Cardinal, ii. 49, 77.
Beaufort, Jane, married to James I., ii. 49; gives birth to a daughter, 63; to twin sons, 78; flies with her son to Edinburgh, 119; escapes thence to Stirling castle, 123; death of, 139.
Beaumont, Sir Henry de, disgraced by Edward II., i. 146; conspires against the Bruce dynasty, 163; his stronghold of Dundarg, 175.
Beaumont, Lewis de, bishop of Durham, plundered and held to ransom by the Border robbers, i. 131.
Beaumont, Monsieur de, iii. 287.
Beaurepair, i. 191.
Beauvois, French ambassador, ii. 353.
Beck, Anthony, bishop of Durham, sent to Norway to induce the Norwegian ministers to send Margaret Queen of Scotland to England, i. 28, 354 *n.*; is appointed governor of Scotland, 29; the magnificence of his state, 42 *n.*
Becket, Sir Thomas à, i. 73.
Bedford, Earl of, iii. 141-143, 183, 208, 218, 231, 310, 352.
Bedford, Duke of, ii. 46, 47, 48.
Bell, Captain, iii. 340.
Bell, Willie, of the Redcloak, iv. 244.
Bellarmine, Cardinal, iv. 310.
Bellenden, Justice-clerk, iii. 216, 227, 319, 323, iv. 98, 99, 109.
Bellievre, Monsieur de, iv. 146.
Benedictus Abbas, i. 257.
Berkeley, Maurice de, governor of the town and castle of Berwick, i. 134.
Berkeley, Sir Walter de, conspires against Bruce, i. 142.
Berklay, Sir Maurice, flies, with his Welsh followers, from Bannockburn, i. 121.
Bermingham, Lord John, created Earl of Louth, i. 127.
Bernadotte, King, i. 305.
Berwick, parliament held at, by Edward I., i. 47; taken by Edward I., 43; horrid cruelties of the English, 43; betrayed to Bruce by a burgess named Spalding, 133; Edward II. assembles an army at, for the invasion of Scotland, 108; besieged by Edward II., 136.
Berwick, treaty of, iii. 118, 132.
Bethune, Margaret, daughter of Cardinal Beaton, iii. 45.
Bettancourt, Monsieur de, iii. 90, 108, 110.
Beveridge, John, a black friar, ii. 363.
Beverley, the Scots extend their ravages to, i. 145.
Beza, iv. 10.
Biggar, High Chamberlain of Scotland, i. 330.
Biland abbey, the English army defeated by Bruce at, i. 144.
Binny, a Scottish labourer, surprises and takes the castle of Linlithgow, i. 111.
Binning, George, his confession and execution, iv. 38.
Biorn, subject of the King of Norway, ii. 172.
Bishops of Glasgow and St Andrews' refusal to sign the new articles of government at Kelso abbey, i. 6.
Bisset's, Walter, appeal to the English court, i. 2.
Bisset, William, arrested for murder of Earl of Athole, i. 2.
Blacader, bishop of Glasgow, ii. 235.
Blacater, the Baron of Tulliallan, ii. 350.
Blacater, Captain, iii. 247, 259, 278.
Blacater, John, iii. 278.
Blacater, tower of, ii. 304.
Black Agnes defends Dunbar castle, i. 182.
Blackbrey, battle of, iii. 77, 77 *n.*
Blackburn, a Scottish preacher, iv. 46, 225.
Black, a preacher, iv. 261.
Black, David, a fierce Puritan, iv. 247-252, 254.
"Black Douglas," the terror of the name of the, i. 130.
Blackfriars, church of the, ii. 315.
Blackfriars, monastery of, iii. 236.
Blackness, ii. 237, 238.
Blackness, castle of, iii. 5, 344, 358.
"Black Parliament," the, 142.
Black Prince, Edward the, i. 224, 329; dies, 331.
Blair castle stormed, ii. 192.
Blantyre, Lord, iv. 271.
Blois, treaty of, iii. 363.
Bloodhounds employed to track Bruce, i. 98, 99.
Bloreheath, battle of, ii. 179.
Blue Blanket, the, ii. 224.
Blyth, Mr James, iv. 207.
Bodie, Mr Gilbert, iv. 262.
Boece, Hector, ii. 268.
Bog of Gicht, 191.

Boleyn, Anne, ii. 352, 356.
Bolton castle, iii. 293, 295, 296.
Boniface, Pope, succeeds in obtaining Baliol's liberty, i. 67; commands Edward I. to desist from hostilities, 70; deserts the cause of the Scots, 74.
Bonner, Bishop, iii. 191.
Bonniton Wood, Laird of, iv. 223.
Bontot, Monsieur de, iii. 76.
Book of Discipline, iii. 131.
Bordeaux, Francis de, French ambassador, ii. 309.
Bordeaux, John de, iii. 239.
Borderers, English, join the Scots, i. 125.
Boroughbridge burnt by Bruce, i. 135.
Borough Muir, fight with foreign mercenaries at, i. 178, ii. 221, 325.
Borough-on-Stanmore ravaged by Douglas, i. 139.
Borthwick, George, archdeacon of Glasgow, i. 49.
Borthwick, assassin of James III., ii. 240.
Borthwick, a gunsmith, ii. 283.
Borthwick, Lord, ii. 78, 296, 303, 328.
Borthwick, Lord, iii. 255, 285, 325.
Borthwick castle, iii. 254.
Bosworth, battle of, ii. 230.
Bothwell, Earl of, ii. 241, 246, 247.
Bothwell, Earl of, ii. 347, 352, 352 *n.*
Bothwell, Earl of, iii. 6, 43, 55, 56, 63; plunders an English emissary, 113, 161, 162, 193; returns from France, 210, 221-224; his plot for the murder of Darnley, 228; severely wounded in a Border fray, 228, 230; conspires against Darnley, 237-241; brought to trial, 242-244; is acquitted, 244; bond of marriage with Queen Mary, 245; carries her off, 247; is created Duke of Orkney, and marries the queen, 251, 252; writes to Queen Elizabeth, 253, 253 *n.*; at Carberry Hill, 255; flight of, 256; takes refuge in Orkney, 278; flies to Norway, 279.
Bothwell, Francis Stewart, earl of, iv. 49, 60, 66, 72, 107; his bold speech to King James, 147, 168, 169, 171, 174; he is accused of witchcraft, 180; breaks out of prison, 181; attacks Holyrood, 182, 184; is countenanced by Elizabeth, 189; is proclaimed a traitor, 196; seizes the king's person, 197; arranges for his trial, 197; writes to Queen Elizabeth, 200; discovers the attempt of the king to escape, 201; is conditionally pardoned, 204; enters into fresh intrigues with Elizabeth, 208; takes refuge in England, 216; is expelled, 220; joins the Popish lords, 221; his desperate condition, 230, 231.
Bothwell, Countess of, iii. 244, 246.
Bound Rode, iii. 274, iv. 8.
Boune, Sir Henry de, is slain in single combat by Bruce, i. 117.
Bourbon, Cardinal, iii. 78.
Bourbon, Marie de, contrasted to James IV., ii. 356.
Bow, the, iii. 127.
Bower, the historian, i. 142.
Bowes, Marjory, wife of Knox, iii. 356.
Bowes, Sir Robert, ii. 371, 372.
Bowes, Sir Richard, iii. 27, 29, 30.
Bowes, Sir Robert, English ambassador, iv. 11, 12, 15, 17-19, 26-29; he is recalled, 29; stormy interview with James VI., 29, 30, 33, 34, 48, 50, 52, 55, 59, 61, 63-65, 69, 71, 175, 176, 187, 188, 190, 196, 203, 204 *n.*, 237, 239, 241, 264, 264 *n.*
Bowes, Sir William, English ambassador, iv. 264, 273.
Boyd, Colonel, a follower of Earl of Bothwell, iv. 231.
Boyd, Lord, iii. 204, 279, 295, 310-312, 325, 361, iv. 39, 47, 68, 70.
Boyd, Lord, son-in-law of James II., ii. 187; his ambitious designs, 195; carries off James III. from Linlithgow, 197; secures indemnity for his conduct, 197; is appointed governor of the king's person, 197; created lord chamberlain, 199; is summoned to answer for his conduct, 203; flies to England, where he dies, 203.
Boyd, Sir Alexander, appointed tutor of James III., ii. 194; his ambitious designs, 195; is involved in the downfall of his brother, tried and executed, 203.
Boyd, Sir Thomas, slays Stewart, lord Darnley, ii. 126; is himself slain, 126.
Boyne, ii. 40.
Brabant, trade with, i. 273,
Brabazon, justiciary of Edward I., i. 39.
Braid, Laird of, iv. 42.
Brakehill fort, 69 *n.*
Brand, a Scottish preacher, iv. 46, 97.
Brandenburg, Elector of, ii. 270.
Bradenburg, Marquis of, iv. 177.
Brankston, village of, ii. 292.
Breadalbane, i. 92.
Brechin, Bishop of, ii. 85.
Brechin castle, Baliol resigns his kingdom to Edward I. in, i. 46, 357 *n*; bravely defended by Sir Thomas Maull, 77, iii. 333.
Brechin, Sir David, having been pardoned by Bruce, joins him, i. 103; goes over to the English, 111; conspiracy and execution, 142.
Brechin, Walter, lord of, i. 328.
Brereton, a Jesuit, iv. 108.
Bretagne, John of, nephew of Edward I., i. 68; appointed guardian of Scotland, 102; dismissed from his office, 103.
Bretigny, treaty of, Scotland sacrificed by the, i. 207.
Brézé, Monsieur de, iii. 68.
Brézé, seneschal of Normandy, ii. 192, 193.
Bridlington, Edward II. escapes to, i. 145.
Brigham, articles of the treaty of, i. 28; their importance in illustrating the inveteracy of the long war between Scotland and England, 28.
Bristol, Wishart preaches at, iii. 41.
Brittany, Anne of, wife of Lewis XII., ii. 285.
Brittany, Duke of, brother-in-law of James II., ii. 144, 144 *n.*, 146.
Brodick castle, surprised by Douglas, i. 96; levelled with the ground, ii. 166.
Brogues, i. 153.
Broke, Richard, iii. 26.
Bromley, Solicitor-general, iii. 346.
Bromley, Lord Chancellor, iv. 136, 137.
Broomhouse, pass of, ii. 288.
Broomhouse, tower of, burnt, iii. 29, 30.
Brosse, Lieur de la, French ambassador, iii. 18, 19, 111, 120, 122, 136.

Broughty castle, iii. 63, 65.
Brown, Richard, conspires against the life of Bruce, is discovered and put to death, i. 142.
Brownhill, Sir Andrew, ii. 283.
Bruce's brother Alexander hanged by the English, i. 98.
Bruce, Bernard, i. 85.
Bruce, Christian, espouses Sir Andrew Moray, i. 147.
Bruce, Sir Edward, makes common cause with his brother, i. 88; lands in Carrick, 97; he ravages Galloway, 103; is present at Bannockburn, 115; he embarks for Ireland, 126; lands at Carrickfergus, 126; overruns a number of provinces, but is compelled by want to retreat to Ulster, 126; is crowned King of Ireland, 127; is attacked by the English at Tagher, his forces routed, and himself slain, 127; his remains barbarously treated by the English, 127.
Bruce, Edward, a Scottish preacher, iv. 216, 217, 242, 258, 282, 301, 302.
Bruce, a Jesuit, iv. 103.
Bruce, Lady Christian, ii. 135.
Bruce, Sir Nigil, joins his brother, i. 92; is taken prisoner and hanged, 95.
Bruce, Robert, a Scottish preacher, iv. 172, 172 *n.*, 238, 252, 254.
Bruce, King Robert, his parentage, i. 83; his claims to the crown of Scotland, 83; his critical position when Wallace raised the standard of national independence, 84; takes the oath of allegiance to Edward I., 84; ravages the lands of Sir William Douglas, 84; enters into a conspiracy with the Bishop of Glasgow, &c., 85; is joined in the regency with Comyn, 85; death of his father, 85; takes possession of his English estates, 85; enters into a secret league with the Bishop of St Andrews, 86; has a conference with Comyn on their rival claims to the crown of Scotland, 86; terms agreed on, 86; his designs betrayed to Edward I. by Comyn, 86; warned by the Earl of Gloucester, he flies to Scotland, 87; possesses himself of proofs of Comyn's treachery, 87; meets Comyn at Dumfries, and stabs him, 87; seizes Dumfries castle, 87; repairs to Lochmaben castle, 88; assembles his friends, 88; takes the field against the English, 88; is crowned at Scone, 89; ravages Galloway, 91; marches to Perth, 91; sends a challenge to the Earl of Pembroke, 91; is surprised and defeated at Methven, 91; a price set on his head, 92; his wandering life, 92; enters the country of Lord Lorn, 92; is attacked by that chief, 92; his personal prowess, 92; sends his queen and her ladies to a place of safety, 93; his danger and distresses, 93; reaches Cantire, 93; is hospitably received by Angus of Islay, 93; takes shelter on the island of Rachrin, 93; his estates confiscated, 96; is excommunicated, 96; despatches Sir James Douglas, &c., to Arran, 96; arrives himself, 96; makes a descent on Carrick, 96; surprises the English force at Turnberry castle, 97; takes refuge in the mountainous parts of Carrick, 97; the English plot his assassination, 98; is pursued by bloodhounds, 98; he defends singly a mountain-pass, 98; the enemy track him by his own bloodhound, 99; his banner taken by Randolph, 99; descends into the plains of Ayrshire, 100; routs the forces of Sir Philip Mowbray, 100; accepts the challenge of Pembroke to meet him at Loudon Hill, 100; his preparations for the battle, 100; defeats Pembroke, 100; defeats the Earl of Gloucester, 101; lays waste Galloway, 101; retreats to the north, 102; entrenches himself near Slaines, 102; retires to Strathbogie, 102; returns to Inverury, 102; routs the army of the Earl of Buchan, 102; ravages Buchan, the territory of Comyn, 103; besieges and takes the castle of Aberdeen, 103; marches into Angus, 103; takes the castle of Forfar, 103; threatens Perth, 103; his reception of Randolph, 105; he invades the territory of Lorn, 105; forces the pass of Cruachin Ben, 106; takes Dunstaffnage castle, 106; is declared by a general council the rightful heir to the throne, 107; he advances upon Perth, 107; retires before the English army, and wastes the country, 108; enters England on the Solway side, and ravages the country, 108; carries fire and sword into Redesdale, &c., 108; besieges Perth, 109; takes it by stratagem, 109; burns the towns of Hexham and Corebridge, 110; takes Durham by surprise, 110; establishes his headquarters at Chester, 110; returns to Scotland, and takes Dalswinton castle, 110; conducts a naval expedition against Man, 113; subdues the island, 113; is incensed at the treaty made with the governor of Stirling castle, 113; makes preparations to meet the English at Bannockburn, 115; the position of his army, 115; his unequal encounter with Sir Henry de Boune, 117; his address to his army, 118; he charges at the head of his reserves, and decides the battle, 121; his generosity after the battle, 122; he makes pacific overtures to Edward II., 125; he passes over to Ireland, 127; returns to Scotland, 127; undertakes an expedition against the Western Isles, 128; he captures John of Lorn, 128; enters England, and devastates the country as far as Richmond, in Yorkshire, 129; again embarks for Ireland, 129; his relations with the See of Rome, 131; his interview with, and reply to, the Papal nuncios, 131; besieges, and takes the town and castle of Berwick, 134; departs from his usual policy of destroying all fortified places; he strengthens the works of Berwick, 134; again devastates the north of England, 135; is formally excommunicated, 135; he makes a diversion into England to raise the siege of Berwick, 138; he agrees to a truce with England, 140; a conspiracy against his life and crown is discovered, 142; prepares for another English invasion, 144; he defeats the English at Biland abbey, 144; his treatment of his prisoners, 145; plunders the north of England, and returns to Scotland, 145; he agrees to a thirteen years' truce, 146; seeing no signs of a permanent peace, he threatens to invade England,

148; he is attacked by a mortal sickness, 148; he besieges Norham, 154; he receives a proposal for the marriage of his son with Joanna, princess of England, 154; is acknowledged as King of Scotland by the English parliament, 154; he retires to Cardross, 157; keeps a lion for diversion, 157; returns to Edinburgh to welcome his son and his youthful consort, 157; returns to Cardross, where he dies, 157; affecting narrative by Froissart, 157; his last advice to the Scottish barons, 158, 367 *n.*; his character and personal appearance, 159; his wives and children, 160; his tomb, 160; his heart deposited in Melrose abbey, 162.
Bruges, complaint of the magistrates of, ii. 36.
Brunker, Sir Harry, iv. 299, 310.
Brunston, laird of Crichton, iii. 21; corresponds with the English court, 38, 40-42; escapes Beaton's attempts to seize him, 42, 43; is privy to the death of Riccio, 216.
Bryan, Sir Francis, iii. 56.
Buchan, the territory of, ravaged by Bruce, i. 103.
Buchan's, Earl of, missive to England, i. 9.
Buchan, Alexander, earl of, regent of Scotland, i. 24.
Buchan, John Comyn, the Black, earl of, appointed to a conference before Edward I., i. 26; does homage to him, 33; receives the lands of Annandale, 41; invades Cumberland, 42; his interview with Edward I., 69; sent to the court of France, 74; noticed, 84, 85; defeated by Bruce, 102, 103.
Buchan, Earl of, Wolf of Badenoch, ii. 2; plunders the cathedral of Elgin, 3; is bequeathed the earldom of Ross, 39; sails for France, 47; slain at Verneuil, 85.
Buchan, Earl of, son of Black Knight of Lorn, ii. 223, 226, 236, 246, 247, 252, 262.
Buchan, Earl of, iii. 326, 340, iv. 9.
Buchanan, George, ii. 186, 326; joins the confederate lords, iii. 268, 294, 304; schoolmaster of James VI., iv. 4, 12, 15; his death and character, 53, 54.
Buchanan, Thomas, a Scottish preacher, iv. 45, 46, 250.
Buckhurst, Lord, iv. 144.
Buccleuch, Laird of, iii. 14, 29.
Buccleuch, Laird of, iii. 315, 322, 327, 332, 340, 341, 358.
Buccleuch, Scott of, ii. 332, 338, 343.
Buccleuch, Sir Walter Scott of, iv. 227, 233, 243-245.
Buccleuch, Lady, iv. 9.
Bull's head, story of the, ii. 380 *n.*
Bull, Pope John issues a, commanding peace, i. 130.
Bull, Stephen, an English merchant, ii. 251, 251 *n.*, 252.
Bulleners, the, iii. 60.
Bullion, laws against the transportation of, ii. 73.
Bullock, William, a warlike ecclesiastic, i. 177; joins the Steward, 185; his extraordinary talents for war and political intrigue, 185; becomes chamberlain to David II., 188; stripped of his honours and starved to death, 189.
Bulmer, Sir William, ii. 288, 290, 324.
Burgh, Lord, iv. 190-192, 227.
Burghs and cities, representatives of, first form a third estate in the parliament which met at Cambuskenneth, i. 148.
Burghersh, Sir Robert de, constable of Dover, i. 67.
Burgh-upon-Sands, Edward I. expires at, i. 101.
Burgoin, physician to Queen Mary, iv. 153-156.
Burgundy, Philip, duke of, ii. 40, 144.
Burgundy, Duchess of, ii. 259, 260.
Burleigh, Lord, ii. 308.
"Burnt Candlemas," i. 201.
Burnt silver, ii. 249, 249 *n.*
Burntisland, iii. 170.
Butcher meat, i. 279.
Bute, the people of, slay the English governor, i. 176.

C

Cabot, John, a Venetian merchant, ii. 266, 266 *n.*
Cabot, Sebastian, ii. 266.
Caday, brook of, iv. 244, 245.
Cadyow, ii. 169.
Caerlaverock, i. 196, ii. 374.
Cæcilia, daughter of Edward IV., ii. 210, 217, 223, 269 *n.*
Cage, Countess of Buchan confined in a, i. 94, 365 *n.*
Cailou, Edmund de, governor of Berwick, slain by Douglas, i. 129.
Cairncross, abbot of Holyrood, ii. 346.
Caithness, Alan Stewart, earl of, ii. 79.
Caithness, Bishop of, ii. 294.
Caithness, Bishop of, iii. 37, 39.
Caithness, Earl of, rebellion of, ii. 349.
Caithness, Earl of, iii. 129; conspires against Darnley, 237, 325, iv. 18, 49.
Caithness, tribute levied by King of Norway in, i. 11.
Cajetano, Cardinal, iv. 231.
Calais, Edward III. lands at, i. 207, ii. 316, iii. 80, 188.
Calder Moor, ii. 13.
Calder, Captain, iii. 340, 341.
Calder, John Campbell, laird of, iv. 229.
Calder, Sandilands, laird of, iii. 40, 41, 43, 76, 216.
Calderwood, the historian, ii. 360, iii. 319, iv. 91, 262, 263.
Caldwell, Mure of, ii. 303, 308 *n.*
Callander, iii. 204, 205.
Callander House, iii. 16, 204.
Calthrops, used at the battle of Bannockburn, i. 115.
Calvin, iv. 10.
Cambrai, the league of, ii. 278, 280; treaty of, 352.
Cambridge University frequented by the youth of Scotland, i. 206.
Cambus, Old, a town near Berwick, i. 133.
Cambuskenneth abbey, ceremony of excommunication in, i. 7.
Cambuskenneth, Abbot of, iv. 14, 70.
Cambuskenneth, i. 52, 77; parliament assembles at, i. 147.
Camden, the historian, iii. 310, iv. 126, 127, 145.
Camera depicta, a chamber at Westminster, iii. 299.

Cameron, bishop of Glasgow, ii. 125.
Cameron, the clan, desert the Lord of the Isles, ii. 71.
Cameron, John, secretary to James I., ii. 57.
Campbell of Ardkinglass, iv. 194, 229, 241.
Campbell, Archibald, of Skipnish, ii. 361.
Campbell of Calder, Sir John, ii. 349, 349 *n.*
Campbell castle, iii. 204, 210.
Campbell of Lochow, Colin, assists in surprising Dunoon castle, i. 176.
Campbell, Duncan, ii. 284.
Campbell, Elizabeth, exposed on a desolate rock, ii. 349, 349 *n.*
Campbell, Gillespic, reproved by David II., *i.* 226, 227, 230.
Campbell of Glenurcha, ii. 258.
Campbell, James, hanged by James I., ii. 70.
Campbell, John Oig, iv. 229.
Campbell, laird of Caddell, iv. 194.
Campbell of Taringhame, Matthew, iii. 95.
Campbell, Sir Colin, ii. 160.
Campbell of Glenurcha, Sir Duncan, ii. 287, 294.
Campbell of Loudon, Sir John, ii. 85.
Campbell of Ayr, Sir Hugh, iii. 90.
Campbell, Sir Neil, joins Bruce, i. 93.
Campeggio, Antonio, Papal legate, ii. 356.
Campvere, Lord of, ii. 96, 144, 160.
Campvere, in Zealand, ii. 280.
Canmore, Malcolm, i. 89.
Candish, Mr, iii. 310.
Cannon, at the siege of Stirling castle, i. 186.
Canterbury, Archbishop of, i. 190.
Canterbury, i. 68, 220, 225.
Canute, i. 264.
Car of Faudonside, iii. 220, 223, 232, 288.
Carberry Hill, battle of, iii. 255.
Carberry, iii. 268.
Car, Dandy, a Borderer, iii. 57.
Cardan, the famous, iii. 73 *n.*, 387.
Cardross, Bruce retires to his palace at, i. 156.
Carey, Mr John, iv. 198, 203, 206, 212.
Carey, Mr Robert, iv. 159, 160, 314.
Carey, Sir George, an English envoy, iv. 50, 52.
Carlisle, attempt to storm, i. 42; Robert Bruce summoned to appear at, 50; invaded by Wallace, 56; Edward I. at, 65; holds a parliament at, 69, 98; Bruce repulsed at, 110, iii. 289, 290.
Carlops, i. 193.
Carmichael, Archibald, iv. 191.
Carmichael, bailie of Abernethy, ii. 344, 344 *n.*
Carmichael, Laird of, iv. 44.
Carmichael, minister of Haddington, iv. 75, 97, 262.
Carmichael, Sir John, iv. 1, 7, 8, 169, 177-179, 187, 225.
Carneburgh, ii. 275.
Carneburgh, castle of, ii. 312.
Carnegie, an heiress, iv. 194.
Carnegie, Sir Robert, iii. 71.
Carrick, Alexander, earl of, made prisoner, i. 169.
Carrick, Earl of, despatched to Scotland, i. 5.
Carrick, earldom of, conferred upon the son of the Steward, i. 213.
Carrick, David, earl of, son of Robert III., ii. 5; created Duke of Rothesay, 6; is appointed king's lieutenant, 8; marries Elizabeth Douglas, 12; challenges Henry IV., 13; defends Edinburgh castle, 13; is imprisoned and starved to death in Falkland castle, 22.
Carrick, John, earl of, Steward of Scotland, proclaimed heir to the throne, i. 327, 328 *n.*; enters into negotations with the Duke of Lancaster, 334; is intrusted with the restoration of order, 337; his bodily weakness, 350.
Carrick, Earl of, afterwards James I., ii. 30; is sent to France, is captured by an English cruiser, and carried to London, 33; is declared king, 35.
Carrick, Sir Gilbert de, i. 95, 366 *n.*
Carrick, Robert de Bruce, earl of, marries Marjory, countess of Carrick, i. 19; proxy for Alexander III., 21; joins his father against Margaret of Norway, 25; takes the fealty to Edward I., 32; he reminds Edward of his promise, 47; elected one of the governors of Scotland, 66; remains faithful to Edward, 84; his death, 85.
Carrickfergus, Edward Bruce lands at, i. 126.
Carrie, John de, chamberlain, i. 229.
Carruthers, William de, a patriot fugitive, i. 176.
Cassillis, Earl of, taken prisoner at the battle of Solway, ii. 374; regains his liberty, iii. 5; his treasons remitted, 28; repairs to the English court, 31; returns as the envoy of Henry VIII., 31; conspires for the assassination of Beaton, 32, 32 *n.*; invites Wishart the reformer to Edinburgh, 42, 78, 129, 207, 285, 294, 308, 320, 325, 328, 340.
Cassillis, Lord, iv. 271.
Castile, Charles, king of, ii. 278.
Castillians, the, 50-52, 348, 358-360.
Castlemilk, iii. 63.
Castlenau, *see* Mauvissiere.
Catesby, iv. 312.
Cathcart, Sir Alan de, companion of Edward Bruce, i. 104.
Cathcart, Lord, iii. 326, 340.
Catharine the Infanta, ii. 276.
Catherine, Lady, daughter of Edward IV., ii. 231, 234.
Catholic party in the Church first begin to persecute for heresy, ii. 37; invoke the aid of the secular power, 62; privileges of the Church maintained by, 66; efforts to suppress heresy, Paul Crawar, a follower of Wickliffe, burnt, 81; feel deep alarm at the increase of Hussites, 123; parliamentary enactment in favour of, 130; privileges granted by James II., 150; claims of supremacy urged by the Archbishop of York, declared to be unfounded by the Holy See, 206; secure the condemnation of Patrick Hamilton to the flames, 342; by the share intrusted to the spiritual estate in the College of Justice, they retard the spread of the Reformed opinions, 351; encouraged by James IV., they persecute the Reformers, 355; several of them consigned by it to the stake, 355, 363; severe statutes passed against heresy, 368; protest against the translation of the Bible, iii. 9; persecution of the Reformers, men hanged for breaking their fast during Lent, 21; the licentiousness of the priesthood, 41; the spiritual tribunal condemns Wishart to the stake, 44; aroused at the progress of Reformation princi-

ples, they summon Knox before an ecclesiastical convention, 83; are seized with alarm at the declarations of the Lords of the Congregation, 86; they denounce the regent for her pusillanimity, 88; they reject the petition of the Lords of the Congregation regarding the election of bishops and parish priests, 90; their treatment of the Protestant party in Perth, 95; their attempts to crush the Protestants defeated, 96, 98; charges made against the Protestants, 101; they are defeated in parliament, 129; they are slighted by Queen Mary on her arrival in Scotland, 157, 158; dispute regarding Church revenues, 159; are persecuted by the multitude, 172; they labour through their agents to gain the co-operation of the continental monarchs to set Mary free and restore Popery in Scotland, iv. 18-20, 32, 43, 83, 95, 108, 112, 113; Throckmorton's plot, 114; Babington's conspiracy, 115; continue their intrigues with the Continent, 164, 165; unite as the confederates of the Brig of Dee, 176; plot of the Spanish blanks, 187; James refuses to persecute them, 193; rigorous measures pursued against them, 196; they are favoured by James, 205; battle of Glenlivat, 220-223; disputes with the Kirk, 242; become reconciled to the Kirk, 259, 260; are favoured by James, 264, 265, 271.
Cattanach, Lachlan, ii. 312.
Cavendish, ii, 283.
Caxton, the printer, ii. 280.
Cecil, Thomas, iii. 360.
Cecil, lord Burghley, writes to the Lords of the Congregation, iii. 102; intrigues in the affairs of Scotland, 104 *passim* 361, iv. 2 *passim* 141; his complacent egotism, 142; continued intrigues against Queen Mary, 143-152; intrigues in the affairs of Scotland, 179, 193, 198, 209, 211; his death, 270.
Cecil, Sir Robert, his intrigues in Scotland, iv. 203, 214, 216 *n.*, 220, 228, 264 *n.*, 276, 278-285, 301-308, 310, 312-314.
Celtic race, the, i. 243.
Cerignola, battle of, ii. 276.
Cessford, Ker of, ii. 338.
Cessford, iv. 232, 233.
Chalmers of Gathkirk, speech of, to Mary of Guise, iii. 84.
Chalmers, the historian, iii. 306 *n.*
Chambers, David, a follower of the Earl of Bothwell, iii. 210, 239.
Chambers, Christopher, ii. 89, 90.
Chambers of Aberdeen, Thomas, ii. 84.
Chambers, Thomas, ii. 89, 91, 91 *n.*, 93.
"Chapter of Milton," i. 139.
Charles I., birth of, iv. 300.
Charles, Archduke, iii. 171.
Charles V., his contempt for the treaty of Bretigny, i. 228; David II. of Scotland sends an embassy to him, 231, 329, 346, 352, 364, 365, 370, 371, ii. 317.
Charles VII. of France, ii. 129, 140, 172-178.
Charles VIII. of France, ii. 227, 262.
Charles IX. of France, iii. 214, 345; his death, iv. 7.
Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy, ii. 204, 205.
Charnock, a Roman Catholic gentleman, iv. 116.
Charter granted to Henry III. by Alexander III., i. 3 *n.*
Chartellet, iii. 170.
Charteris of Amisfield, ii. 228.
Charteris, John, a conspirator against Cardinal Beaton, iii. 22.
Chartley, Queen Mary prisoner in, iv. 122-125, 128-133.
Chartulary of Scone abbey mutilated by Edward I., i. 46, 356 *n.*
Chasteauneuf, iv. 135.
Chastelherault, Duchess of, iv. 20.
Chateau Cambresis, treaty of, iii. 80.
Chatsworth, a friar, ii. 313.
Chatsworth, iii. 333.
Chattan, Clan, ii. 258.
Chaucer, ii. 268, iii. 150.
Chepman, Walter, introduces printing into Scotland, i. 44.
Chester, Bruce establishes his headquarters at, i. 110.
Cheviots, the, ii. 290.
Chisholm, William, bishop of Dunblane, ii. 263.
Chisholm, bishop of Dunblane, iii. 206.
Chisholm, a Popish agent, iv. 168.
Christiern, king of Norway, ii. 172, 199-201.
Christiern, prince-royal of Denmark, ii. 270, 270 *n.*
Christiern II. of Denmark, ii. 314, 350.
Christina, Bruce's sister, made prisoner, i. 94.
Christison, a Scottish preacher, iv. 46.
Chronicle of King Swerar, i. 17.
Church polity, book of, iv. 14, 18.
Cinque ports, French merchantmen plundered by some English ships off the, i. 41.
Clancameron, iii. 40.
Clanranald, iii. 40.
Clanricarde, Earl of, iv. 306.
Clankayn, iii. 40.
Clark, a spy, iii. 136.
Clarencieux, a herald, ii. 320, 324.
Clement VII., Pope, death of, ii. 356.
Clement VIII., Pope, iv. 309, 310.
Clergy, the, of England, demur to the supplies demanded by Edward I., i. 48.
Clergy, Scottish, they refuse to submit to the Papal legate, i. 19; commanded by the Pope to be at peace with England, 74; declare Robert Bruce king, 107; taxed by David II., 203; courts held by the, 251; commercial enterprise of, 266; contention with the Pope, 285; learning of, 289-291; arts and sciences, 300; architecture of their buildings, 306, 307; patronised by James I., ii. 64; reformation of, by Bishop Kennedy, 138; their service courted by James II., 142, 147; their act against pestilence, 174; attempt of Archbishop Graham to reform the, 207; licentiousness of, 217; from the ranks of are drawn the first Reformers, 342; preferred to office by James V., 351; their wealth and zeal, 359.
Clifford, Lord Robert, invades Annandale, i. 57; tries to enter Stirling castle, 116.
Clifford, Lord, ii. 260.
Clinton, Lord, iii. 56, 57, 63, 68.
Clothes, price of, in the early ages, i. 282.
Clunie-Gordon, Laird of, iv. 223.
Clyde, private ships in the, ii. 251, 251 *n.*
Coal, state of, in the early ages, i. 281.
Cobham, Lord, iv. 306.

Cobham, Sir Richard, at the battle of Biland abbey, i. 144.
Cochrane, an architect, ii. 114, 213, 220-222, 243.
Cockburn of Henderland, ii. 349.
Cockburn, Sir Robert, iv. 226, 227.
Cockburn, an archer, iii. 211.
Cockburn of Skirling, Sir James, iii. 205.
Cockburn, Sir John, iv. 258.
Cockburn, Patrick, governor of Dalkeith castle, ii. 159.
Cocklaws, tower of, ii. 27.
Cockermouth, iii. 288.
Cockpool, Laird of, ii. 246.
Cockpool, Laird of, iii. 63.
Coinage, an enactment regarding the, ii. 173, 175 *n.*
Coins, their value, ii. 176.
Coke, Sir Edward, iv. 265.
Coldbrandspath, ii. 13.
Coldingham Moor, iv. 160.
Coldingham, priory of, ii. 235, 299.
Coligny, Admiral, iii. 164.
College of Justice first instituted, ii. 351.
Collingwood, Sir Cuthbert, iv. 7, 161.
Colmkill, records of, i. 13 *n.*
Colquhoun of Luss, Sir John, ii. 189, 215.
Colvil of Oxenham, murder of, ii. 145.
Colvile of Cleish, iii. 96, 321, iv. 70.
Colvile of Easter Wemyss, iv. 68, 70, 216, 218.
Colvile, Mr John, iv. 56, 57, 60, 61, 64, 66, 70, 72, 73, 85, 189, 196, 197, 214, 228, 238, 278.
Columbus, ii. 266.
Commercial regulations, ii. 87.
Como, Cardinal, iv. 19.
Competitors for the crown of Scotland meet at Holywell Haugh, i. 32.
Comyn, earl of Menteith, i. 3; loyalty of, to Alexander III., 5; deprived of influence, 6; prepared to defend Scotland, 6; death of, 8.
Comyns' opposition to the regency gains ground, i. 7; protest of the, against the government, 7; take action against the government, 7; conclude a treaty with Wales, 7.
Comyn, John, repairs to the court of France, i. 67; defeats the English army at Roslin, 75; finds it impossible to resist Edward, 76; driven to the mountains, 77; attempts to defend the passage of the Forth, 77; submits to Edward, 78, 360 *n.*; tries to rouse the suspicions of Edward against Bruce, 86; his conference with Bruce, 86; betrays the designs of Bruce to Edward, 86; is slain by Bruce and his followers, 87.
Comyn, Sir Robert, slain by Kirkpatrick, i. 87.
Comyn, Walter, slain, i. 169.
Condé, Prince of, iii. 168.
Confederates of the Brig of Dee, 176.
Confession of faith, Scottish, iii. 129.
Congregation, Lords of the, iii. 86-90, 97.
Conspiracy, Babington's, iv. 101, 109, 112.
Conspiracy against the life of Bruce, i. 142.
Conspiracies against the royal family of Scotland, ii. 132, 133.
Constable, Sir Marmaduke, ii. 290, 292.
Constance, Bishop of, i. 114.
Continental wars, Scots nobility seek distinction in, i. 206.
Convention of the nobles, ii. 127.
Copenhagen, ii. 200, 201.
Copland, an English knight, captures David II., i. 192.
Copland, governor of Northumberland, i. 198.
Corbeuil, Bishop of, a Papal nuncio, i. 131.
Cordelli, French ambassador, ii. 314.
Corebridge, town of, burnt by Bruce, i. 110.
Corrichie, hill of, iii. 167.
Corstorphine, ii. 278.
Cornwall, Earl of, advances to Perth, i. 108.
Cotesbache, chamberlain of Edward II., i. 103; his orders acquaint us with an early source of Scottish wealth, 103.
Council, Scottish, meet in Holyrood monastery, i. 221; their proceedings, 221.
Council, innovation on the functions of the, i. 229.
Council, Lords of the, iii. 225, 326.
Council, secret, iii. 49, 50.
Counter, the, a prison, iv. 129.
Courcelles, Monsieur de, iv. 146, 165.
Couriers, dilatory, how dealt with, iv. 63.
Courtney, Piers, ii. 6.
Cowdenknowes, Laird of, iv. 160.
Cowper, a Scottish preacher, iv. 149.
Cowsland, village of, ii. 347.
Crab, John, a famous Flemish engineer, i. 134; attacks the English fleet in the Tay, 167.
Cranston, William, burgess of Edinburgh, ii. 127.
Craig, castle of, iv. 225.
Craig, Thomas, famous feudal lawyer, iv. 201.
Craig, a Protestant minister, iii. 216, 223, 250, 251, 267.
Craig, John, a Scottish clergyman, iv. 43, 54, 97.
Craig, James, iv. 212.
Craiganairgid, ii. 313.
Craigmillar castle, ii. 310.
Craigmillar, iii. 229, 231, 236, 237, iv. 15.
Craignaucht Hill, ii. 126.
Crail, Knox preaches at, iii. 96.
Cramond Island, Lombard merchants offer to establish a manufacturing settlement on, i. 23.
Cranmer, Bishop, ii. 355.
Cranston, Mr Michael, iv. 253.
Cranston, village of, ii. 347.
Crawar, Paul, a Bohemian, burnt for heresy, ii. 81.
Crawford, Alexander, second earl, ii. 138, 140, 141, 292, 293, 297, 329, 351.
Crawford, Earl of, iii. 207, 325, iv. 13, 66, 49, 106, 169.
Crawford, Captain John, a retainer of Darnley, iii. 235, 236, 314, 336, 337.
Cressingham, Hugh de, made treasurer of Scotland, i. 47; receives a letter from Edward I., 48; his character, 48; slain at the battle of Stirling bridge, 55; his skin made into a sword belt, 55.
Crevant, defeat of the Scots at, ii. 63, 123.
Crichton, bishop of Dunkeld, ii. 363.
Crichton, Lord William, ii. 68.
Crichton, Lord, ii. 226, 227, 234.
Crichton, Sir George, created Earl of Caithness, ii. 160.
Crichton, Sir James, created Earl of Moray, ii. 159.
Crichton, William, governor of Edinburgh

castle, ii. 121; his conduct to James II., 123; feud with Livingston, 124; reconciliation, 125-128, 130, 131, 135-137, 142, 153, 154, 161; his death, 163.
Crichton, Sir William, son-in-law of James II., ii. 187.
Crichton, Sir Andrew, ii. 137.
Crichton, a Jesuit, iv. 95, 230.
Crichton of Sanquhar, ii. 228, 234.
Crie, battle of, i. 104.
Cristicleik, a cannibal, i. 186.
Cristijohnson, leader of the clan Chattan, ii. 5.
Crofts, Sir James, iii. 104, 115, 120, 137.
Cromarty, Earl of, i. 18.
Cromwell, secretary to Henry VIII., ii. 354.
Crookston, castle of, ii. 250.
Crookston, Laird of, iii. 254.
Crosier, Clement, a moss-trooper, iii. 15 *n.*
Croyser, William, a Papal nuncio, ii. 134.
Cruachin Ben, pass of, i. 105.
Crucifubreis, Alfonso de, a Papal nuncio, ii. 123, 134.
Cruel, Peter the, i. 224.
Cryne, a Fleming, i. 128 *n.*
Cubiculars, the, iv. 252, 256.
Culcreuch, Galbraith of, surprises Dumbarton castle, ii. 136.
Cullen, Captain, iii. 240, 254, 259, 283.
Culross, i. 144.
Culsamond, iv. 225.
Cumberland, Earl of, iv. 137.
Cumberland invaded by Comyn, earl of Buchan, i. 42; compelled to retreat by the citizens of Carlisle, iv. 2; people of, purchase a truce from Bruce, 110.
Cunningham, a follower of the Earl of Lennox, iii. 244.
Cunningham, John, an Edinburgh citizen, iv. 235, 241.
Cunningham, laird of Drumwhassel, iii. 336.
Cupar, iii. 92.
Cupar Moor, iii. 96, 174.
Curle, Elizabeth, iv. 156, 157.
Curle, Queen Mary's French secretary, iv. 119-121, 125, 126, 128, 131, 133, 134, 134 *n.* 135, 142.
Curry, Walter, a merchant of Dundee, i. 187.
Cyprus, King of, at the English court, i. 216.

D.

Dacre, Lord, English ambassador, ii. 284, 290, 292, 293, 296, 297, 300, 301, 303, 304, 307, 308, 317, 318 *n.*, 322, 323, 323 *n*; his death, 337, 337 *n.*
Dacre, an English leader at the battle of Solway Moss, ii. 374.
Dacres, Leonard, iii. 325.
D'Aguillar, Don Juan, iv. 305.
D'Alençon, Duke, iii. 363, iv. 7.
Dalgleish, George, a page, iii. 282.
Dalkeith, iv. 15, 47.
Dalkeith, castle of, besieged, ii. 158; taken, iii. 67.
Dalswinton castle taken by Bruce, i. 110.
Dalswinton, i. 196.
Damiote, an astrologer, iii. 219.
Damon, Monsieur, iv. 266.
Darcy, Lord, ii. 296.
Darcy, Sir Anthony, ii. 324, 352.
Darni, Sir John, a French knight, ii. 25.
Darnley, Stewart of, one of an embassy from France, ii. 64, 76.
Darnley, Lord, iii. 181, 182; arrives in Scotland, and dances with the queen, 188; his descent, 191, 192; is knighted by the queen and created Earl of Ross, 196; plot against his life, 204-206; is created Duke of Albany, 207; accorded the title of king, 207; his marriage, 207; estranged from the queen, 215; plots against the life of Riccio, 215, 216, 220-223; intrigues with the Romanists, 225-227, 230-233; is invited by Mary to come to Edinburgh, 236; is lodged at the monastery of the Blackfriars, 237; murder of, 238; his burial, 239.
Darnley, Lord, ii. 223.
Darrel, Mr, iv. 133.
D'Arsie de la Bastie, Anthony, ii. 271, 278, 297, 300, 309-311.
David, earl of Huntingdon, i. 83.
David, earl of Moray, son of James II., ii. 187.
David, son of Alexander III., death of, i. 22.
David, son of Bruce, proposed marriage of, with Joanna, princess of England, i. 154.
David's tower, iii. 360, 361.
Davidson, provost of Aberdeen, ii. 40; slain at Harlaw, 41.
David II. crowned at Scone, i. 163; is sent to France, 168; returns to Scotland, lands at Innerbervie, 187; prepares to invade England, 190; he rejects the advice of Sir W. Douglas, 190; he encamps near Durham, 191; is attacked by the English, 191; battle of Durham, 191; is taken prisoner, 192; is imprisoned in the Tower, 192; is liberated upon his parole, 195; to retain his liberty, is prepared to do homage to Edward III., 195; the Scots unanimously oppose him, and he returns to captivity, 195; on payment of a heavy ransom, he is liberated, 202; change which imprisonment had made on his character, 203; rescinds the proceedings of the Steward, 205; his jealousy of the Steward makes him the tool of Edward III., 205; first instalment of his ransom paid, 206; retreats to Kinross to escape the pestilence, 208; to revenge the death of his mistress he imprisons the Earl of Angus, 208; he proposes to the Scottish Parliament that a son of Edward III. should be declared heir to the throne of Scotland, 211; his rage at the answer of the three estates, 211; takes up arms against the Steward, &c., 212; compels their submission, 213; marries Margaret Logy, 213; visits the shrine of the Virgin at Walsingham, 214; enters into a secret treaty with England, 214; agrees to sacrifice the independence of Scotland, 214; his indifference to the condition of the country, 221; is obliged to pawn his jewels for debt, 224, 376 *n.*; with his queen makes a pilgrimage to Canterbury, 225; takes the field against John of the Isles, 228; divorces his queen, 230; meditates an expedition to the Holy Land, 231; falls ill and dies, 231; his character, 231, 232.
Davie the devil, iv. 180.
Davison, Mr Duncan, a Scottish preacher, iv. 225.
Davison, Mr John, minister of Liberton, iv. 42-46, 53, 54, 63, 75, 196, 206.

Davison, Mr, secretary to Queen Elizabeth, sent to Scotland, iv. 7, 55, 59, 78; his interview with Sir James Melvil, 79; has audience of the king, 80; gets up a faction against Arran, 85; is recalled from Scotland, 92; is sent for by Elizabeth to bring the warrant for the execution of Queen Mary, 150, 150 *n.*; is upbraided by Elizabeth, and degraded, 159.
D'Ayala, Pedro, Spanish envoy, ii. 265.
Deacons of trades, ii. 73.
Dearth and famine in Scotland, i. 55.
Death, hymn to, iii. 170.
Debt, David II.'s first queen compelled to pawn her jewels for, i. 224.
De Croc, French ambassador, iii. 225, 226, 229, 232, 243, 249, 251, 252, 255, 256, 258, 260, 265, 344, 346.
D'Elbeuf, Monsieur, iii. 110, 117.
De Jure Regni, iv. 79.
De la Ware, Lord, iii. 346, iv. 136.
De Rambouillet, iii. 213.
De Sevre, French ambassador, iii. 117, 118.
De Thermes, a French officer, iii. 70, 70 *n.*, 71.
Dee, Dr, astrologer to Queen Elizabeth, iv. 312.
Defender of the Faith, ii. 356, 372.
Dempster of Caraldstone, David, ii. 165.
Denmark, King of, at the English court, i. 216.
Denmark, King of, ii. 285.
Deposition of Edward II., i. 148.
Derby, Earl of, tilts with Sir W. Douglas, i. 183.
Derby, Earl of, iii. 304; iv. 137.
Deserters, a test of their sincerity, iii. 37.
Desmond, Earl of, ii. 260.
Devorguilla, mother of Baliol, i. 36, ii. 43.
Dhu, Angus, or Black Angus, ii. 40, 70.
Dickson, an English pedagogue, iv. 266.
Dickson, Pait, ii. 215.
Dickson, servant of Sir J. Douglas, i. 98.
Dickson of the Tower, Tom, ii. 215.
Dieppe, James IV. lands at, ii. 358.
Dieppe, iv. 24.
Dingwall, ii. 272.
Dirleton, Baron of, i. 337.
Dirleton, castle of, i. 61.
Dirleton, ii. 127.
Discipline, book of, iii. 358.
Dolu, treasurer of Queen Mary, iii. 240.
Donald of the Isles defeated and slain, i. 105.
Donald of the Isles, iii. 35, 39.
Donald Dhu, rebellion of, ii. 272, 272 *n.*, 276.
Donegal, a powerful chieftain, i. 104 *n.*
Donibristle, the English fleet arrive at, i. 130; the armament effect a landing, but are repulsed, 130.
D'Osell, French ambassador, iii. 52, 64, 75, 95, 117, 120, 136, 142, 145, 149-152.
Douglas, Lord William, departs for the crusades, i. 19.
Douglas, Sir William, surrenders Berwick castle to Edward I., and swears fealty to him, i. 44; joins the Scottish forces, 49; takes the castle of Disdeir and Sanquhar, 50; afterwards submits to Edward, 51; is present at Wallace's election, 58, 89.
Douglas, Sir James, joins Bruce, i. 89: accompanies Bruce in his wanderings, 92, 93; he lands in Arran, and takes Brodick castle, 96; surprises and destroys Douglas castle, 97; "The Douglas Larder," 98; the "Good Sir James," 99; defeats Sir P. Mowbray, 100; again surprises and destroys Douglas castle, 105; takes Randolph prisoner, 105; he defeats the men of Lorn, 106; he wastes and sacks the north of England, 110, 130, 139, 149, 150; attacks Carlisle, and is repulsed and wounded, 110; takes Roxburgh castle, 111; his noble conduct at Bannockburn, 117-120; his rapid pursuit of Edward II., 121; he slays in fight Sir T. de Richemont, 129; he encounters Edmund de Cailou, and slays him, 129; in personal combat, he slays Sir Ralph Neville, 130; the terror of his name, "The Black Douglas," 130; he assists in the attack on Berwick, 134; he is appointed provisionally tutor to the heir of Scotland, 135; he attempts to carry off the Queen of England, 138; defeats the English army at Mitton, 139; cuts off the advanced guard of the English at Melrose, 144; desperate courage at the battle of Biland abbey, 144; makes a night attack on the English camp at Wear, 152; his skilful retreat, 152; he promises to fulfil the dying request of Bruce, 158; sets sail for the Holy Land, 161; visits Spain, 162; is slain in battle by the Saracens, 162 *n.*; is buried in the parish church of Douglas, 162; his character and personal appearance, 162.
Douglas, Archibald, lord of Galloway, brother of Sir James, surprises Edward Baliol's encampment, i. 169; ravages Gillsland, 169; is elected regent, 170; is defeated at Halidon Hill, 172; is mortally wounded and made prisoner, 173.
Douglas, Sir William, knight of Liddesdale, i. 162; is attacked by the English and made prisoner, 169; is put in fetters, 170; is liberated, 177; is sorely wounded, 181; expels the English from Teviotdale, 183; is wounded at the siege of Perth, 185; takes Edinburgh castle by stratagem, 187; treacherously seizes Sir A. Ramsay, 188; starves him to death in Hermitage castle, 188; is appointed governor of Roxburgh castle, &c., 189; is taken prisoner at the battle of Durham, 192; he purchases his liberty by sacrificing his allegiance, 195; enmity against Lord W. Douglas, 196; is murdered by his kinsman, 196.
Douglas, Lord William, nephew of the Good Sir James, i. 194; the steady enemy of England, 195; he murders his kinsman Sir W. Douglas, 196; overreaches Edward III., 200; passes over to France, 201; is present at the battle of Poictiers, 201; returns to Scotland, 201; opposed to the designs of David II. to change the succession, 212; submits to the royal clemency, 213; visits the shrine of St Thomas à Becket, 218; absents himself from the meetings of parliament, 224; proceeds beyond seas, 224; returns to Scotland, and announces his intention to oppose the accession of Robert III., 326; abandons his intention, 327, 333 *n.*; the king's daughter promised in marriage to his son, 327; is promoted, 327.

Douglas, Earl of, invades England, i. 343; encounters Hotspur at Newcastle, 346; in single combat captures Percy's pennon, 346; retreats to Otterburn, 347; battle of, 347; is killed, 348; is buried in Melrose abbey, 348.
Douglas, Archibald, earl of, the Grim, marries his daughter to Duke of Rothesay, ii. 12; his death, 20.
Douglas, Archibald, earl of, takes part in the murder of the Duke of Rothesay, ii. 22; invades England, 23; battle of Homildon Hill, 24; made prisoner, 25; joins the Percy rebellion, and is taken prisoner at the battle of Shrewsbury, 28; is ransomed, 36-38; interests himself in the liberation of James I., 48; is arrested at Perth, 58; is liberated, 59.
Douglas, Archibald, fourth earl of, ii. 121.
Douglas, Archibald, fifth earl of, and duke of Tourraine, appointed lieutenant-general of Scotland, ii. 121; died at Restalrig, 125.
Douglas, William, sixth earl of, ii. 128; his vast possessions, 129; his incautious expressions, 131; is induced to visit Edinburgh, treacherously seized, and beheaded 132, 132 *n.*, 380, 381.
Douglas, James, seventh earl of, surnamed the Gross, ii. 133, 134.
Douglas, William, eighth earl of, marries his cousin, the Fair Maid of Galloway, ii. 133; his descent and allies, 135; he enters into a coalition against Chancellor Crichton, 136; is created lord-lieutenant of the kingdom, 136; levels Barnton castle with the ground, 137; obtains a divorce from his first wife, i. 137, 137 *n.*; coalition of, with Livingston and the Earl of Crawford, ii. 139; invests Edinburgh castle, 139; its surrender to him, 139; forms a treasonable league, 142; he strives to plunge the country into war with England, 143; attends the tournament at Stirling at the head of 5000 retainers, 145; repairs to Rome, 151; returns to Scotland, 152; is deprived of his lieutenancy, 153; his tyranny, 153; seeks to precipitate an outbreak with the government, 154; prepares for a rising, 154; puts Maclellan a tutor to death, 154; his scornful jesting, 155; the king opens negotiations with him, 156; he goes to Stirling under the safe conduct of the king, 156; is stabbed there by the king, and slain, 157.
Douglas, James, ninth earl of, burns Stirling, ii. 158; renounces his allegiance, 159; sues for pardon, 160; engages in treasonable correspondence with the Yorkists, 163; is discovered, and flies, 163, 164; gathers a force, but is defeated by the king, 164; is outlawed, 165; finds shelter in England, 166; invades Scotland, but is repulsed, 172; leagues with Edward IV. of England, 191, 192 *n.*; close of his career, 228.
Douglas' Archibald, one of the conspirators against Darnley, iii. 235, 237, iv. 30, 31, 37, 38, 52, 53, 57, 101, 105, 107; is permitted to return to Scotland, 111, 112, 147, 148.
Douglas, Mr Alexander, a Scottish preacher, iv. 225.
Douglas, Archibald, hostage for Earl of Douglas, ii. 37.
Douglas of Kilspindy, Archibald, ii. 338, 366.
Douglas, Archibald, constable of Edinburgh castle, iv. 39, 74.
Douglas, Arthur, iii. 320.
Douglas, Archibald, uncle to Earl of Angus, ii. 315, 344, 347.
Douglas castle, rebuilt by the English, i. 99.
Douglas, Catherine, her noble sacrifice, ii. 91.
Douglas, Elizabeth, ii. 91.
Douglas, George, brother of Lochleven, iii. 284, 285, 322, iv. 41, 42, 52, 147.
Douglas, George, Darnley's cousin, iii. 215, 220, 232, 259.
Douglas, Sir Archibald, sent as ambassador to France, i. 329; takes Sir T. Musgrave prisoner, 334; sacks Northumberland, 336; ravages Cumberland, 342.
Douglas, Sir William, surnamed the Black, invades Ireland, i. 344.
Douglas of Strathbrock, Sir James, ii. 5.
Douglas, Sir George, ii. 338, 341, 344, 247, 368, 372; intrigues with Henry VIII., iii. 5, 12, 13, 24, 28, 31, 31 *n.*, 32, 33, 55, 65; his castle of Dalkeith taken, 67, iv. 27.
Douglas of Balveny, James, ii. 143-151.
Douglas of Dalkeith, James, hostage for Earl of Douglas, ii. 37.
Douglas, James, hostage for his grandfather, ii. 37.
Douglas of Parkhead, James, ii. 366.
Douglas of Pittendreich, James, iv. 39.
Douglas, Sir J., at Homildon, ii. 25.
Douglas, John, a converted friar, iii. 84, 86, 91, 261.
Douglas, laird of Whittingham, iv. 35, 39.
Douglas Larder, i. 98.
Douglas, Lady Margaret, the mother of Darnley, ii. 305; married to Duke of Lennox, iii. 25.
Douglas, Margaret, the Fair Maid of Galloway, ii. 133-135, 161.
Douglas, a messenger, iii. 322.
Douglas, a page, iii. 284.
Douglas of Parkhead, iv. 39.
Douglas, the poet, ii. 268.
Douglas, James, prior of Pluscardine, iv. 39.
Douglas, provost of Lincluden, iv. 99, 105.
Douglas, Sir Robert, iii. 261.
Douglas, William, brother of Earl of Angus, ii. 315.
Douglas of Lochleven, William, iii. 261, 264, 276, 288, iv. 9, 15, 49, 68, 70.
Douglas, Sir William, hostage for Earl of Douglas, ii. 37.
Douglasdale, ii. 161.
Douglas of Drumlanrig, Archibald, ii. 39.
Douglas of Abercorn, James, ii. 34.
Douglas of Spot, iv. 280.
Douglas, David, seized and executed, ii. 132.
Douglas, Gavin, bishop of Dunkeld, treasonable intercourse of, with England, ii. 299, 301, 305, 306, 307 *n.*, 310, 315, 316, 319, 319 *n.*, 320.
Douglas, John of, ii. 226.
Douglas, history of the house of, i. 91.
Douglas, church of, i. 163.
Douglas, earldom of, i. 196.
Douglas Tower, i. 198.
Doune, Lady, iv. 183.
Doune, Thomas of, a Scottish "scoumar" of the sea, sails up the river Ban, i. 128.
Doune castle, iv. 26, 27.

Dow, Craig, iii. 338.
Dowart, ii. 272.
Draffen castle, iv. 21.
Drake, Admiral, ii. 283.
Drimmin, iv. 222.
Dron, pass of, iii. 204.
Drummond, Baron, ii. 234, 246, 249, 250, 285, 300, 301.
Drummond, clan, iv. 169.
Drummond, Lady Euphemia, ii. 270.
Drummond of Hawthornden, ii. 42.
Drummond, Lady Margaret, ii. 246, 268-270, 270 *n.*, 394.
Drummond, Lady Sybilla, ii. 270.
Drummond, Sir Malcolm, outrage on, ii. 29.
Drummond, Mr Thomas, a preacher, iii. 194.
Drury, Sir Drew, iv. 151-153, 156.
Drury, Sir William, iii. 234, 240, 244, 258, 282, 319, 323, 328, 339, 343, 344, 346, 355, 357, 361, 363.
Drury, a Jesuit, iv. 103, 164.
Dryburgh abbey burnt, i. 341.
Dryburgh, Abbot of, iv. 14, 70.
Drylaw, Laird of, iii. 361.
Du Bartas, the poet, iv. 170.
Dublin, expedition sails from, iii. 39.
Duchal, castle of, ii. 250.
Dudley, duke of Northumberland, iii. 56, 58-62.
Dudley, Sir Edward, iii. 63.
Dudley, Robert, earl of Leicester, iii. 176, 177, 183, 184, 218, 304.
Duke, title of, first introduced into Scotland, ii. 6.
Dumbarton, seasonable arrival at, of arms, &c., i. 176, ii. 366, iii. 26, 39, 325; its capture by Captain Crawford, 336, 337.
Dumfries, the headquarters for a time of Edward I., i. 70.
Dun, one of the Babington conspiracy, iv. 129.
Dunbar, battle of, i. 45.
Dunbar, Gawin, archbishop of Glasgow, ii. 346, 351, 357, 363.
Dunbar, archdean of St Andrews, ii. 306.
Dunbar, bishop of Aberdeen, ii. 315.
Dunbar, castle of, given up to the Scottish leaders by the Countess of, i. 44; is summoned to surrender by Warenne, earl of Surrey, 44; agrees conditionally to do so, 45; Surrey routs the Scottish army near, 45; disastrous result of the battle, 45; defence of, by Black Agnes, 182.
Dunbar, Countess of, i. 44.
Dunbar, Elizabeth, daughter of Earl of March, ii. 12.
Dunbar, Earl of, despatched to Scotland, i. 5.
Dunbar, Patrick, earl of, opposed to the claims of Margaret of Norway, i. 25; receives a grant from Edward I., 38; treachery of, 62.
Dunbar, Mariot de, ii. 138.
Dunbar, the poet, i. 296, ii. 268.
Dunbar, Sir Alexander, ii. 246.
Dunbar, Sir David, slays one of the assassins of James I., ii. 92.
Duncan of Airdrie, Andrew, ii. 342.
Duncan, earl of Fife, regent of Scotland, i. 25; is assassinated, 25.
Duncan, earl of Fife, made prisoner at Dupplin, i. 166; joins the English, 167; officiates at Baliol's coronation, 167.
Duncan, Jely, iv. 180.
Duncanson, Robert, ii. 92.
Duncanson, Thomas, minister of the royal household, iv. 16, 22, 42, 46.
Dundalk, i. 127.
Dundarg, a stronghold in Buchan, i. 75.
Dundas, Archibald, ii. 146.
Dundas castle, surrender of, ii. 146.
Dundas of Dundas, ii. 151.
Dundas, James, ii. 147.
Dundee, general council of Scottish prelates and clergy meet at, i. 107.
Dundee becomes surety for the ransom of James I., ii. 49.
Dundee, Constable of, slain at Harlaw, ii. 41.
Dundonald, Sir John, slain at Dunfermline, ii. 60.
Dundrennan abbey, iii. 288.
Dunfermline, abbey of, i. 160.
Dunfermline, a son born to Bruce at, i. 145.
Dunfermline, Pitcairn, abbot of, iii. 317, 331, 338; intrigues against Mary, 349, 351, 352, iv. 12, 13, 16, 24, 25, 70.
Dunibersel, iv. 182.
Dunipace, Laird of, iv. 232.
Dunkeld, Bishop of, iii. 361.
Dunkeld, Railston, bishop of, ii. 142.
Dunkeld, Sinclair, bishop of, repulses the English at Donibristle, i. 130.
Dunkirk, iv. 212.
Dunoon, castle of, taken by storm, i. 176.
Dunse, ii. 311.
Dunstaffnage, castle of, i. 106, ii. 80.
Dunskaich, castle of, ii. 312.
Duplanis, John, French envoy, ii. 305, 306, 309, 316.
Dupplin Moor, battle of, i. 165.
Dupplin, Sir William, assists in the defence of Stirling castle, i. 79.
Durham, Darnley's page, iii. 278.
Durham, battle of, i. 191; the Scots defeated with great loss, 192, 371 *n.*
Durham, bishopric of, ravaged by Bruce, i. 108.
Durham, city of, sacked by Bruce, i. 110; the inhabitants of the bishopric of, purchase a truce, 110.
Durham, contributions levied on, by the Scots, i. 124.
Durie, John, an Edinburgh minister, iv. 41-46, 51, 71, 97.
Durisdeer, Sir Robert Stewart of, at Homildon, ii. 25; conspires against Henry IV., 27; slain at the battle of Shrewsbury, 28.
Durward, Alan, i. 3; accusation against, by Comyn and Mar, 4; restored to favour, 5; flight to England, 7.
Durward the Justiciar's mission to England, i. 9.

E.

Earl Marshal, sarcastic remark of the, iii. 130.
Easter Wemyss, Lord of, iv. 283.
Eccles, on the Tweed, ii. 326, 327.
Eclipse, the date of an historical event verified by an, i. 11.
Eclipse, total, i. 432; called the "black hour," ii. 81.
Eden, the river, iv. 244, 245.
Edinburgh, peace with England proclaimed

at, in 1327-8, i. 155; visited by Duke of Lancaster, 335; spares it from plunder, 335; burnt and plundered, 341; James II. carried off to, ii. 128; James, earl of Douglas, and others renounce their allegiance to the king at, 159; burnt by the Earl of Hertford, iii. 23.
Edinburgh castle surprised by Earl of Gloucester, i. 5; after a siege of eight days, surrenders to Edward I., 45; taken by Sir Thomas Randolph, 112; defence of, by Kirkaldy of Grange, iii. 316, 358-361.
Edgebuckling Brae, iii. 63.
Edmeston Edge, iv. 216, 216 *n.*
Edmonson, James, iii. 278.
Edmonstone Edge, iii. 57.
Edrington castle, ii. 354.
Edward I., his coronation, i. 20; his first designs against the independence of Scotland, 20; does homage to the King of France for his continental possessions, 20; accepts the homage of the King of Scotland for the possessions held in England by that sovereign, 21; projects the marriage of his son with the Maiden of Norway, 24; the estates of Scotland seek his advice, 25; Eric, king of Norway, sends plenipotentiaries to him, 26; by his appointment the Scottish and Norwegian commissioners meet at Salisbury, 26; he procures a dispensation from the Pope for the marriage of his son, 26; he enters into a treaty with Scotland and Norway, 26; he addresses a letter to the Scottish Estates, 27; he sounds the Scottish commissioners as to the projected marriage, 27; sends Antony Beck to Norway to induce the Norwegian ministers to send the Queen of Scotland to England, 28; appoints plenipotentiaries to treat with the Scottish Estates respecting the marriage of his son, 28; the influence which he acquires by the treaty of Brigham, 28; appoints Antony Beck governor of Scotland, 28; demands the surrender into his hands of all the strongholds in Scotland, 28; his designs on hearing of the death of the young Queen of Scotland, 31; assembles an army and holds a conference at Norham, 31; assumes the title of "Lord Paramount of the kingdom of Scotland," 31; he gives the Scottish Estates time to consider his pretensions, 32; he lavishes his promises among the Scottish nobility, 32; as Lord Paramount of Scotland, he presides at the meeting to settle the claims of the competitors for the throne of Scotland, 32; the Scottish regents deliver the kingdom into his hands, 33; appoints officers to govern Scotland, 33; receives homage from the chief nobility of Scotland, 34; visits many places in Scotland, and receives homage from the principal inhabitants, 34; sends officers into the remote districts to receive the same, 34; he returns to Berwick to decide on the claims of the competitors for the Scottish throne, 34; he awards the kingdom to Baliol, 37; a citizen of Berwick appeals to him against the decision of the Scottish regents, 39; intimates his intention to be bound by no previous promises, 39; summons Baliol and his principal nobility to meet him at Newcastle, 39; announces his determination, 39; his policy towards the King of Scotland, 39; in another case of appeal he again commands Baliol to appear before him, 40; he is summoned as a vassal of the King of France to appear at Paris, 41; he refuses to do so, and renounces his allegiance to Philip, 41; he declares war against France, and summons the King of Scotland and his nobles to attend him, 41; they treat his summons with scorn, 41; his dissimulation, 42; professes friendship for Robert de Bruce, and promises him the crown, 42; he assembles an army for the invasion of Scotland, 43; besieges Berwick, storms the town, and puts the inhabitants to the sword, 43; despatches the Earl of Surrey to take Dunbar castle, 44; the castle surrenders to him in person, 45; the principal castles are surrendered to him, 45; keeps the feast of the nativity of St John in Perth, 45; he receives messengers from Baliol, 45; he receives from the Scottish king the surrender of his kingdom, 46; he sends Baliol and his son to the Tower, 46; he continues his progress to Elgin, 46; he destroys the chartulary of Scone abbey, 46; he holds a parliament at Berwick, and receives the homage of the Scottish nobility, &c., 47; he is reminded of his promise by Robert de Bruce, 47; his haughty reply, 47; his measures for the pacification and subjugation of Scotland, 47; in his war with France he encounters the opposition of his prelates and nobility, 48; he supersedes the Earl of Surrey as governor of Scotland, 52; carries many of the Scottish nobility with him to Flanders, and sends their sons as hostages to England, 52; he passes over to Flanders, 52; the English nobility are again refractory, 58; he promises to concede their demands, 59; he concludes a treaty with the King of France, 59; arrives in England, and assembles an army for the invasion of Scotland, 59; he reaches, without opposition, Templeliston, 61; his address to Sir John Marmaduke, 61; his treatment of the Welsh mutineers, 62; he is about to retreat to Edinburgh, when he learns by treachery the position of the Scottish army, 62; the battle of Falkirk, 64; he secures victory by bringing up his reserve of archers and slingers, 64; he is compelled by famine to retreat, 65; he issues writs for the assembling of a new army, 66; Philip of France attempts to induce him to make peace with Scotland, 66; he declines his mediation, 67; he liberates Baliol at the intercession of the Pope, 67; he bestows Baliol's lands upon his own nephew, 68; his restless activity, 68; assembles a parliament at York, 68; marches with his army to Berwick, but his nobles again prove refractory, 68; he again invades Scotland, 69; takes several castles, and encamps at Irvine, 69; his hopes of conquest delayed by the approach of winter, 70; he grants the Scots a truce, 70; an admonitory bull addressed to him by the Pope, 70; admonitions to him of the Archbishop of Canterbury, 71; his wrath on hearing them, 71; summons a parliament at Lin-

coln, 72; submits to it his claim to Scotland, 72; refuses to submit his pretended rights in Scotland to the See of Rome, 73; he assembles another army for the invasion of Scotland, and makes a pilgrimage to the shrine of Sir Thomas à Becket, 73; establishes his headquarters at Linlithgow, 73; he returns to London, 74; he sacrifices his ally the Earl of Flanders, 74; he again invades Scotland, 76; advances victoriously to Morayshire, penetrates into Aberdeenshire, returns to Dunfermline, where he takes up his winter quarters, 77; he convenes an English parliament at St Andrews, and commands the attendance of the Scottish barons, 78; his rage against Wallace, 78; he besieges Stirling castle, 79; his personal risks, 79; he receives personally the surrender of Stirling castle, 81; he sets a price upon the head of Wallace, 81; his measures for the capture of the Scottish chief prove successful, 81; discovers the designs of the younger Bruce, 87; receives intelligence of the death of Comyn, 89; prepares to invade Scotland, 90; vows to die in Palestine, 90; proceeds to Carlisle, 91; publishes an ordinance against those engaged in the murder of Comyn, 93; commands the execution of two of Bruce's brothers and Sir Reginald Crawford, 98; his fatal illness, 101; expires at Burgh-upon-Sands, 101; his dying commands, 101.

Edward II., as Prince of Wales, invades Scotland, i. 69, 76, 91; he succeeds his father, 101; receives, at Roxburgh castle, the homage of some Scottish barons, 101; appoints a guardian of Scotland and returns to England, 101; appoints another guardian, 102; writes to the citizens of Perth, 103; his capricious policy, 105; accepts the mediation of France, 106; invades Scotland, 108; complains to the Pope of the merciless spirit of the Scots, 108; he writes letters to John of Argyle, 109; he writes to the warden of Dundee, 111; he makes immense preparations for the relief of Stirling castle, 113; magnitude of the force with which he invades Scotland, 114, 366 *n.*; marches to Bannockburn, 116; battle of Bannockburn, 116-121; his flight from the field, 121; he has recourse for aid to the Pope, 130; he assembles an army and besieges Berwick, 136-138; raises the siege, and tries to intercept Douglas and Randolph, 139; he seeks a truce with Scotland, 140; determines to obtain a peace by force of arms, 143; invades Scotland, 143; plunders and destroys Melrose, 144; retreats homewards, 144; is attacked by the Scots at Biland abbey, and completely defeated, 144, 145; wishes for a cessation of hostilities, 146; he complains of the conduct of the Pope, 146; is deposed, 148.

Edward III. assumes the royal dignity, i. 148; invades Scotland, 151; is nearly captured or slain in a night attack, 152; his policy towards Scotland, 160; connives at a conspiracy for the restoration of Edward Baliol, 162; his misrepresentations of the conduct of the Scots, 169; he writes to the Earl of Flanders, &c., 170; besieges Berwick, 170; terms proposed by the besieged, 170; they give him hostages, 170; to intimidate the citizens, he hangs the son of the late governor, 171; defeats the Scots at Halidon Hill, 172, 173 *n.*; fills the ranks of his army with convicted criminals, 174; Baliol surrenders to him the town, castle, and county of Berwick, 174; invades Scotland, 177; consents to a short truce, 178; again invades Scotland, 180; hastens to the aid of the widow of the Earl of Athole, 181; returns to England, 181; forms an alliance with John of the Isles, 182; he claims the crown of France, 182; the measures by which he hopes to crush the spirit of the Scots, 194; is compelled to conclude a truce, 194; resumes his design of conquest, and invades Scotland for the fifth time, 200; narrowly escapes being made prisoner, 201; encourages Scots merchants, 205-209; secret conference with David II., 214; entertains at once four kings, 216; grants royal letters to a Scots tile-maker, 219, 220; will not abate his conditions to the Scottish Parliament, 221, 225; goes to war with France, 228; abates his pretensions, 228; agrees to a truce with Scotland, 228; refuses to give Robert II. his kingly title, 330; dies, 331; his character, 331.

Edward the Black Prince, i. 224.

Edward IV., ii. 192, 205, 217.

Edward VI., iii. 72, 74.

Edward, Prince, Henry VIII.'s son, ii. 364, 364 *n.*

Egidia, daughter of Robert II., i. 344.

Eglinton, Earl of, ii. 357, iii. 153, 163, 207, 245, 285.

Eglinton, Earl of, iii. 325, 340, iv. 39, 60.

Eglinton, Sir Henry de, i. 219.

Egremont, plundered by Douglas, i. 128.

Ellame kirk, ii. 262.

Eleanor, daughter of James I., ii. 95, 96 *n.* 140.

Ellem of Batterden, ii. 215.

Elgin, Edward I. advances as far northward as, i. 46.

Elizabeth, Queen, accession of, to the throne, iii. 80; her general policy, 80; her policy towards Scotland, 105; her antipathy to Knox, 106; early descries the ability of Regent Moray, 107; secretly assists the Lords of the Congregation, 109; sends an army into Scotland, 118; her instructions to her envoy Randolph, 141; refuses a passport through England to Queen Mary, 149; sends out ships to capture the Scottish queen, 150; her jealousy of the Scottish queen marrying with a foreign prince, 175; she proposes as a husband for Mary, the Earl of Leicester, 176; her duplicity in the affairs of the Earl of Lennox, 178-180; her interview with Sir James Melvil, 182, 183; her opposition to Queen Mary's marriage with Darnley, 198, 202; she writes to Queen Mary, 208; she finds herself in an awkward predicament, 212; her knowledge of the murder of Riccio, 218; she is appointed godmother to James VI., 231; her feelings on the capture of the Scottish queen, 259, 270; receives a letter from the fugitive Queen of Scotland, 289; she resolves on detaining Mary as a prisoner, 291; commands Regent Moray to send commissioners

to York, 294; her conduct during the proceedings of the commissioners at York and Westminster, 295-306; her rage against the Duke of Norfolk respecting his projected espousal of Queen Mary, 309; she writes to the Regent Moray, 311; she discovers the full extent of the Duke of Norfolk's intrigues, 312, 315; she demands the surrender of the Earl of Northumberland, 318; position of her affairs in Scotland on the death of Regent Moray, 322, 323, 327; she orders the invasion of Scotland, 328; her duplicity, 331; her nefarious policy, 333, 334; she hears of the massacre of St Bartholomew, 345; resolves on the secret execution of Queen Mary, 347; her measures on the death of Regent Mar, 354; sends assistance to Morton, 360; orders the surrender of Kirkaldy of Grange and others to Morton, 362; alarmed by intelligence which Morton sends, iv. 3, 4; holds a secret conference on putting Mary to death, 6; sends Killigrew and Davison to Scotland, 7; insists on Morton holding a personal conference with the president of the north, 8; her rage on his refusal, 8; sends an envoy to Scotland to preserve peace between the regent and the northern nobles, 11; is much satisfied at Morton's return to power, 18; she sends to Scotland to plead the cause of the Hamiltons, 21; her fears excited by the arrival of Esmé Stewart, 22; she sends Arrington to Scotland with secret orders, 23; refuses to advance supplies to James VI., 24; she is thrown into alarm by reports of the abduction of the Scottish king, 26; sends Sir R. Bowes as envoy to Stirling, 26; negotiations for her marriage with the Duke of Anjou, 28; her vacillating policy towards Scotland, 28; her rage on hearing that Dumbarton castle was to be intrusted to the keeping of the Earl of Lennox, 29; roused into action by the arrest of Morton, 32; disgusted at the failure of the plot against Lennox, she leaves Morton to his fate, 35; alarmed at the "association," she sends Arrington again to Scotland, 41; learning the success of the "raid of Ruthven," she sends an envoy to the king, 50; seizes secret agents of the Scottish queen, 52; anxiety to obtain the casket said to contain Mary's letters to Bothwell, 54; gives an audience to Gowrie's agent, 57; her parsimony, 59-61, 64; her duplicity, 63; her alarm at the death of Gowrie, 77; inclined to pursue a moderate course in the affairs of Scotland, 78; her alarm at the ascendancy of the anti-English faction, and her policy, 82-85; position of Elizabeth with respect to Scottish parties, 94; gives an audience to the Master of Gray, 94, 95; approves of his proposals, and writes to Arran to deceive him, 96; recommends Gray to spare Arran's life, 98; peremptory demand made to James by her envoy, 105; sends Randolph to negotiate a treaty of alliance, in which he is successful, 108-110; she is informed of the plots against her life and kingdom, 130; orders the arrest of Mary, and seizure of her letters, &c., 131; is alarmed for her own safety, 132; her atrocious cruelty to the Babington conspirators, 132; her efforts to collect evidence to criminate Mary, 133; writes to Mary, 135, 137; she is informed of the sentence pronounced by the commissioners against Mary, 143; she declines to ratify the sentence, 144; her interview with Sir W. Keith, 147, 148; stormy interview with the Master of Gray, refuses to spare Mary's life, 149; signs the warrant for her execution, 150; advises her secret assassination, 151; her dissimulation and injustice in the affair of Queen Mary's death, 158; excitement caused on the Continent by her execution of Mary, 164; in prospect of the Spanish invasion she makes proposals to James which she does not adhere to, 166, 167; her alarm at the Popish conspiracy in Scotland, 188; her encouragement of the Earl of Bothwell in his treasonable practices, 189, 192; her fickleness and dissimulation, 204; her letter to James VI., 212, 213 *n.*; expels Bothwell from England, 220; she is threatened by the Islesmen, 235; her policy in dealing with them, 236; writes to King James with respect to a plot against her life, 265; her estrangement from him, 278; her last parliament, 305; her last confidential letter to King James, 311; her last moments and death, 312-314.

Elizabeth, Bruce's second wife, death of, i. 156.

Elizabeth, Princess, daughter of Edward IV., ii. 217.

Elizabeth, Princess, of England, iii. 12.

Elizabeth, Princess, daughter of James VI., iv. 315.

Elliot of the Copshaw, Jock, iv. 244.

Elliot of Park, iii. 228.

Elphinston, bishop of Aberdeen, ii. 227, 230, 236, 268, 297, 299.

Elphinston, Nicholas, a servant of Regent Moray, iii. 265, 266, 272, 273, 273 *n.*, 317, 318, 332, 343, 351, 357.

Elphinston, abbot of Dunfermline, iv. 24.

Elphinston, king's secretary, iv. 25.

Elphinstone, Mr, iv. 253.

Elphinstone, Mr John, secretary, iv. 239, 253, 265, 266, 271.

Elphinstone, Master of, iv. 272.

Ely, Bishop of, attacks the Scots, i. 138.

Ely, Bishop of, iii. 80.

Engines used at the siege of Berwick, i. 134, 137.

Englefield, Sir Francis, iv. 115, 119.

English Borderers join the Scots, i. 125.

English government writes to certain of the Scottish nobility, praising them for their allegiance, i. 56; their names, 56 *n.*

English governors in Scotland, i. 37 *n.*, 38.

English nobility refuse to grant aid to Edward I. but on conditions, i. 59.

Enterprise at Stirling, Protestant associates of the, iv. 176.

Entertainment, magnificent, given by the Duke of Athole, ii. 353.

Episcopacy, Mary appears disposed towards, iii. 294; establishment of, 358; re-established by Morton, iv. 9; conflict with, 40; establishment of, by James VI., 256.

Erasmus, ii. 268.

Eric, king of Norway, married to Margaret,

princess of Scotland, i. 21; sends plenipotentiaries to Scotland, 25.
Eric, king of Denmark, &c., treaty of, ii. 68.
Errol, Earl of, ii. 293, iv. 168, 222, 224, 231, 260.
Erskine, Sir Robert, engaged in a secret mission, i. 210, 211; adopts measures to maintain tranquillity on the accession of Robert II., 327; is richly rewarded, 327.
Erskine, Sir Robert, ii. 136.
Erskine, governor of Dumbarton castle, ii. 301.
Erskine, John, governor of Stirling castle, ii. 303, 310, 321.
Erskine, Lord, ii. 328.
Erskine, Master of, ii. 374.
Erskine of Dun, an early reformer, ii. 355, iii. 41, 78, 79, 85, 91, 92, iv. 42, 46, 97.
Erskine, Lord, protector of Queen Mary, iii. 64, 115.
Erskine, Arthur, iii. 220, 222.
Erskine, Lady, iii. 261.
Erskine, Alexander, governor of James VI., iv. 7; he joins the confederacy against Morton, 11; admits Argyle and his confederates to the presence of the king at Stirling, 12-14; agrees with his nephew, the Earl of Mar, and is made governor of Edinburgh castle, 15.
Erskine, Sir Thomas, iv. 292, 293.
Essex, Earl of, iii. 352.
Essex, Earl of, iv. 299, 301, 302.
Esk, the river, ii. 374.
Essars, Sir Piers de, a French knight, ii. 25.
Etal, the tower of, ii. 289.
Euphemia, countess of Ross, takes the veil, ii. 39.
Euphemia, duchess of Touraine, ii. 133.
Eure, Sir Ralph, warden of the marches, iii. 15, 23, 28-30.
Eva and Isobel, daughters of Ingram de Umfraville, given up as hostages to Edward I., i. 45.
Evandale, Chancellor, ii. 222-224.
Evandale, Lord, ii. 189, 204, 227, 228.
Evreux, Lewis, count of, ambassador of Philip of France, i. 106.
Ewan, of the clan Cameron, ii. 258.
Exchequer Court, ii. 196.
Exchequer, an, instituted at Berwick, i. 47.
Excommunication of counsellors of Henry III. at Cambuskenneth, i. 7.

F

Faaside Hill, battle of, iii. 58.
Fair Maid of Galloway, ii. 171.
Fairs and public markets, ii. 176.
Falconer, a sea officer, ii. 284, 286, 347.
Falkirk, the Scottish army under Wallace, encamped in the forest of, i. 62; battle of, 63, 357 *n.*; disparity in numbers of the opposing armies, 64; shameless retreat of the Scottish horse, 64; the victory gained by the English archers, 64.
Falkland, ii. 343, iv. 65, 66, 70.
Falkland palace, ii. 334.
Famine in Scotland, i. 125.
Farmers in the feudal ages, i. 253.
Fast castle, ii. 38; taken by Patrick Dunbar, 39, iii. 264, 264 *n.*, iv. 286, 287, 291.
Fast, the general, iv. 216.
Feast of Pentecost at Westminster, i. 90.
Feasts in the early ages, i. 311, 312.
Fénelon, Le Motte, iii. 319, 345, iv. 55, 59, 60.
Fentoun, William de, injustice done to, i. 337.
Fenwick, Mr, iv. 7.
Ferdinand of Spain, ii. 265, 271, 283.
Ferguson, David, a Scottish preacher, iv. 45, 46, 67, 261.
Fernelith, daughter of Earl of Athole, i. 1 *n.*
Fernyhirst castle, ii. 324, iii. 69.
Fernyhirst, Ker of, iii. 315, 322, 327, 332, 338-340, 344, iv. 26, 37, 49, 52, 55, 100, 101, 105, 108.
Fernyhirst, young, iv. 159.
Ferrers, Lord, i. 215.
Feudal nobility of Europe, commotion among the, ii. 212.
Fiennes, Gillemin de, governor of Roxburgh castle, i. 111.
Fiery cross, iii. 56, 376 *n.*
Fieschi, Ottobon de, Papal legate, i. 18, 19.
Fife, Malcolm, earl of, i. 6 *n.*
Fife, Earl of, death of, i. 40.
Fife, Duncan, earl of, a minor, i. 40.
Fife, Duncan, earl of, i. 66, 67.
Fife, Earl of, taken prisoner at the battle of Durham, i. 190; tried for treason by Edward III., 194.
Findhaven castle, iii. 45, 158.
Finlay, bishop of Lismore, ii. 60.
Fisher, execution of, ii. 356.
Fisheries, state of the, ii. 54.
Fitz-Alan, Bryan, appointed a regent of Scotland, i. 33.
Fitzwaters, Lord, iii. 60.
Fivy, i. 103.
Fivy, Lady of, ii. 4.
Flamborough Head, ii. 33.
Flanders, states of, send an embassy to James I., ii. 64, iv. 21.
Fleck or Affleck, confidential servant of Morton, iv. 35.
Fleet, the Scottish, alarms the English coast towns, i. 128.
Flemings, their extensive trade with Scotland, i. 43; their heroic defence of the Redhall, i. 43.
Fleming, Sir David, ii. 23; slain at Lang Hermandston, 34.
Fleming of Biggar, Malcolm, ii. 129.
Fleming, Sir Malcolm, beheaded, ii. 132, 132 *n.*
Fleming of Cumbernauld, David, ii. 133, 133 *n.*, 382.
Fleming, Robert, ii. 142.
Fleming, Lord, ii. 195, 196, 227, 303, 328.
Fleming, Lord, taken prisoner at Solway, ii. 374; regains his liberty, iii. 5.
Fleming, Lord, iii. 260, 285, 288, 289, 325, 336, 337.
Fleming, Sir Francis, iii. 56.
Fleming of Boghall, iii. 337.
Fleming, Lady, iii. 337.
Fleming, an engineer, iii. 355.
Fletcher, Dr, dean of Peterborough, iv. 154, 156-158.
Fletcher, a playactor, iv. 274.
Flodden, hill of, ii. 290.
Flodden, battle of, ii. 290-294.
Flower, the, one of the ships of Sir Andrew Wood, ii. 251.

Foix, Gaston de, ii. 281.
Fokert, Patrick, ii. 190.
Fontenay, French ambassador, iv. 93, 96.
Football forbidden, ii. 55.
Forbes of Pitsligo, John, ii. 141.
Forbes, Lord, ii. 360, 361.
Forbes, Lord, iii. 325.
Forbes, Lord, iv. 183, 222, 253.
Forbes, the clan, ii. 341, iv. 169.
Forbes, Master of, ii. 360, 361.
Ford castle, ii. 289, 291.
Fordun the historian, i.-ii., *passim*.
Forest kirk, Selkirkshire, meeting of Scottish nobility at, i. 157.
Forester, Sir Adam, ii. 14; at Homildon, 25.
Forester, Sir John, ii. 48, 57, 59.
Forester, Sir John, ii. 137.
Forfar, conference at, i. 7.
Forfar, castle of, taken, i. 103.
Forman, Andrew, bishop of Brechin, ii. 268, 285, 299.
Forrester, David, murder of, iv. 232.
Forret, Dean Thomas, vicar of Dollar, ii. 362.
Forster, an English agent in the assassination of Cardinal Beaton, iii. 32, 33 *n.*, 34.
Forster, Sir John, an English warden, iii. 159, 315, 325, iv. 7, 100.
Forteviot, Edward Baliol encamps at, i. 165.
Forth, Firth of, two hundred sail in the, iii. 22.
Fortresses, refusal of Sir William Sinclair, Sir Patrick Graham, and Sir John Fowlis to surrender the, to Edward I., i. 29.
Foster, Captain, a follower of Earl of Bothwell, iv. 231.
Fotheringhame, Sir Thomas, ii. 246.
Fotheringay castle, ii. 219, iv. 135-137, 143, 144, 151, 152, 160.
Foulden kirk, iv. 85, 89, 90.
Foulis, Mr David, iv. 240.
Fowler, Mr David, master of revels, iv. 219.
Fowler, Thomas, iv. 166, 167.
Fowler, William, almoner of James I., ii. 48, 68.
Fowler, Mr William, a spy, iv. 56, 60.
Fox, bishop of Durham, ii. 265, 267.
Fox, author of the "Book of Martyrs," ii. 342.
Fox, Dr, English commissioner, ii. 354.
France, ancient league with Scotland renewed, i. 146.
France, King of, at the English court, i. 216.
Francis I. of France, ii. 306, 309, 316, 324, 330, 332, 346, 348, 350, 352, 358, 359, 370, 371, iii. 52.
Francis, Signor, iii. 239, 240.
Francis II. of France, husband of Queen Mary, death of, iii. 136.
Francisco, an Italian, iii. 210.
Frank, an English soldier, is instrumental to the taking of Edinburgh castle, i. 112.
Fraser, Sir Alexander, i. 91; joins Bruce, 102.
Fraser, James, i. 172, 173.
Fraser, Sir Simon, completely routs the English army at Roslin, i. 75; fined and banished from Scotland, 78; surrenders to the English, 95; is carried to London, 95; his cruel death, 95.
Fraser, Sir Simon, i. 168, 172, 173.
Fraser, William, bishop of St Andrews, appointed one of the last moments of Bruce, 157; quoted, 151, 152; on the visit to Flanders of Sir James Douglas, 162, 334, 336, 341 *n.*, 345 *n*; on the battle of Otterburn, 346.

G

Gala, river, i. 234.
Gald, Roderic, ii. 40.
Galford, Sir W. Douglas is murdered at, i. 196.
Galloway, invaded by Henry de Percy, i. 47.
Galloway, Bishop of, a Protestant convert, iii. 112.
Galloway, Patrick, a Scottish preacher, iv. 46, 75, 105, 172, 208, 297.
Gamboa, Don Pedro de, iii. 56, 67.
Game laws in reign of James I., ii. 76.
Gamelin, Bishop, deprived of influence, i. 6; consecrated Bishop of St Andrews, 7; arrest of, ordered by Henry III., 7.
Gardiner, Bishop, iii. 131.
Garioch, iv. 225.
Garencieres, Lord of, i. 185, 197.
Garter, order of the, ii. 354, iv. 177.
Gasklune, battle of, ii. 4.
Gates, Sir Henry, iii. 319, 323.
Gaveston, Piers, favourite of Edward II., i. 101.
Gaunt, John of, duke of Lancaster, i. 334; invades Scotland, 335; finds refuge in Edinburgh, 335; makes good his retreat, 336.
Gawdy, Sergeant, iv. 138.
Gawin, a carpenter, ii. 315.
Gawin of Dunbar, ii. 24; destroys Roxburgh, 39.
Gelt, the river, iii. 325.
Genealogical ceremony at coronations, i. 4 *n.*
General Assembly of the Church, iii. 159, 268.
General Council held at Edinburgh, i. 436, ii. 87.
Geneva, state of the Reformation at, iii. 83.
Geneva, iii. 83, 107.
Geneva, Catechism of, iii. 131.
Genoese ships at the siege of Dunbar, i. 183.
Geoffrey de Langley, guardian of Alexander III., i. 5.
Germany, iv. 19.
Gest of Arthure, i. 295.
Ghent, i. 170.
Gibson, Murdoch, ii. 129.
Gicht, Laird of, iv. 223, 224, 260.
Gifford, Gilbert, a priest, iv. 114, 114 *n.*, 119, 120-123, 125.
Gifford of Sheriffhall, ii. 227.
Gilles Hill, near Bannockburn, i. 116.
Gillespie, a Scottish preacher, iv. 46.
Gillsland ravaged by Bruce, i. 108.

Giraldus Cambrensis, i. 297.
Glammis, ii. 368.
Glammis, Lord, ii. 237, 245.
Glammis, Lord, ii. 361, 361 *n.*, iii. 26, 321, 326, iv. 12; is slain in a scuffle, 13.
Glammis, Earl of, iv. 48, 49, 68, 70, 72, 74, 78, 103, 105.
Glammis, Master of, iv. 182, 194, 201, 205, 232, 234, 239.
Glammis, Lady, ii. 345 *n.*; burnt to death, 361, 361 *n.*, 362, 405.
Glasgow, i. 88; Edward III. penetrates to, 178; Regent Moray at, iii. 286, 287.
Glasgow, Archbishop of, ii. 255, iii. 8, 9.
Glasgow, Bishop of, ii. 161, iv. 24.
Glasgow, Bishop of, refuses to affix his seal, i. 6; sent commissioner to Salisbury, 26.
Glasgow, bishopric of, iv. 41.
Glasgow, castle of, ii. 308.
Glasgow cross, ii. 162.
Glasgow, Dean of, slain at Flodden, ii. 294.
Glasgow, see of, i. 94.
Glasgow University, foundation of, ii. 162.
Gledstanes, Mr John, iv. 260, 262.
Glencairn, Earl of, Lord Kilmaun created, ii. 238, 241.
Glencairn, Master of, ii. 260.
Glencairn, slain at the battle of Flodden, ii. 294.
Glencairn, Earl of, taken prisoner at battle of Solway, ii. 374; regains his liberty, iii. 5, 14; intercepts a French subsidy, 18; his treachery, 20; promised a pension by the King of England, 24; is attacked by Arran, 24; his treason leads to the rout of the Scots, 27; his treason remitted, 28; supports Wishart, 41; negotiates with England, 55; remonstrates with Mary of Guise, 90; takes an active part in the Protestant movement, 95, 118, 120, 132, 203, 207; takes up arms against the queen, 209, 255, 260, 269, 286, 308, 318, 340, iv. 13, 25, 39, 47, 48.
Glenclouden, Douglas, provost of, iv. 239.
Glencoe, the Macians of, ii. 272.
Glendinning, Sir Adam, i. 345.
Glendinning, Sir Simon, hostage for Earl of Douglas, ii. 37.
Glendonane, Sir Simon, ii. 156.
Glendowart, ii. 272.
Glendower, rebellion of, ii. 14, 27.
Glengarrie, Alexander of, ii. 366 *n.*
Glenlivat, battle of, iv. 223, 224.
Glenurchy, Campbell of, iv. 229.
Gloucester, Earl of, despatched to Scotland, i. 5.
Gloucester, Gilbert, earl of, brother of Robert de Bruce's wife, i. 25 *n.*; warns Bruce of his danger, 87; slain at Bannockburn, 122; his body sent to England, 122.
Gloucester, Duke of, ii. 143.
Gloucester, Duke of, afterwards Richard III., ii. 218, 222, 223, 227-230.
Gorges, Thomas, iv. 131.
Good King Robert's testament, i. 158.
Goodall the historian, iii. 306 *n.*
Goodman, Christopher, iii. 112, 126, 130, 131.
Gordon, Sir Adam de, one of an embassy to Rome, i. 141.
Gordon, Sir Adam, at Homildon, ii. 25.
Gordon, Adam, iii. 167.
Gordon of Auchendown, Adam, iii. 342, 344, 357, 358, 363, iv. 177.
Gordon of Buckie, iv. 182.
Gordon, James, a Jesuit, iv. 212, 230, 260.
Gordon, Sir John, invades England, i. 332.
Gordon, Sir John, iii. 166, 167.
Gordon of Lochinvar, Sir John, iii. 295.
Gordon of Letterfury, ii. 286.
Gordon, Lord, iii. 165, 166.
Gordon of Auchendown, Sir Patrick, iv. 187, 223.
Gordon, Sir Roger, at Homildon, ii. 25.
Gordon of Strathdon, William, iv. 212.
Gordon, Catherine, married to P. Warbeck, ii. 261, 264.
Gordon, a Jesuit, iv. 164.
Gorm, John Stewart, ii. 92, 136.
Gorm, Donald, ii. 218.
Government of Scotland remodelled, i. 6.
Gourlay, Norman, a Protestant martyr, ii. 355.
Gowrie, Earl of, iv. 208.
Gowrie, John, third earl of, iv. 277; his early training, 277; becomes rector of the University of Padua, 277; his reception by Queen Elizabeth, 278; he arrives in Scotland, 280; his intimacy with King James, 280, 281; his speech in Parliament, 283; his conspiracy to seize the person of the king, 284-296.
Gowrie conspiracy, iv. 276, 284.
Gowrie, Countess of, cruel treatment of, iv. 90.
Gowrie House, iv. 286, 287, 291, 293.
Graham, Euphemia, ii. 131.
Graham of Fintry, iv. 68, 188, 190.
Graham of Peartree, John, agrees to assassinate the Earl of Angus, iv. 91.
Graham, Mr John, iv. 177.
Graham, Master of, iii. 60.
Graham, Sir John de, counsel of at battle of Durham, i. 191.
Graham of Abercorn, Sir John, joins Wallace, i. 61.
Graham, Malise, created Earl of Menteith, ii. 88, 162.
Graham, Patrick, married to daughter of Earl of Strathern, i. 87; kills an English knight in jousting, 184.
Graham, Sir Patrick de, conspires against Bruce, i. 142; slain at the battle near Durham, 145.
Graham of Kincardine, Sir Patrick, ii. 87.
Graham, Patrick, ii. 195; is created Archbishop of St Andrews, 206; made Pope's legate for Scotland, 206; opposition to his authority causes his death, 207.
Graham, Richard, accused of sorcery, iv. 180.
Graham, Sir Robert, one of the assassins of James I., ii. 58, 87-93.
Graham, Sir William, hostage for Earl of Douglas, ii. 37.
Grange, Laird of, iii. 210.
Granton, vessel wrecked at, ii. 65.
Granton Craig, iii. 22.
Grant, Laird of, ii. 258, iv. 169, 182.
Gray, Sir Andrew, aids in storming Edinburgh castle, i. 112.
Gray, Master of, iv. 71; his personal appearance, 87; his treacherous character, 87; betrays Queen Mary, and takes service under Elizabeth, 93; has a private meeting with Lord Hundson, 94; proceeds to London and has an audience of Elizabeth, 94; proposals which he submits to her, 94, 95; he returns to Scotland, 96; succeeds in creating a breach between James and Mary, 96; de-

liberates on the murder of Arran, 98; his double treachery, 101; writes to Archibald Douglas, 101; enters a new plot for the over throw of Arran, 102; while absent, he is accused as the author of the conspiracy, 105; he faces the danger, and is received into favour by the king, 106; success of his plot, 106; is sent to London regarding Queen Mary, 148; his enmity against Mary, 148; his interview with Elizabeth, 149; his disgrace and banishment, 162, 163.
Gray, Sir Patrick, ii. 154-156.
Gray, Captain Andrew, iv. 223.
Gray, Lord, iii. 26, 63, 325, 358.
Gray, James, iv. 194.
Greame, Arthur, iii. 333.
Greame, Riches George, iii. 333.
Great seal of Scotland, broken into pieces at Brechin, i. 47; a new one placed in the hands of the English chancellor, i. 47.
Greek fire, i. 80.
Gregory, a spy, iv. 114.
Greenwich, ii. 253.
Greenwich, Queen Elizabeth at, iii. 225.
Greenlaw, John, ii. 27.
Greosolles, a French knight, ii. 323, 328, 330.
Grey, Lord, of Wilton, iii. 56, 58, 60, 66, 67, 118, 120, 159, iv. 137.
Grey, Lady Catherine, iv. 314.
Greystock castle, iii. 325.
Grimani, the Papal legate, iii. 13, 18.
Groom, attack of a, on Hamilton the bastard, ii. 340.
Grummach of Sleat, Donald, ii. 366 *n.*
Gueldres, Duke of, ii. 142.
Gueldres, Charles d'Egmont, duke of, ii. 276, 283, 287.
Guesclin, Du, his successes against the English, i. 228, 329.
Guevara, John, iv. 273, 299.
Guienne, Henry III., expedition against, i. 5.
Guise, Cardinal of, iii. 152.
Guise, Duke of, iii. 6, 71, 79, 80, 152, 158; assassination of, 171.
Guise, Duke of, iv. 19, 24, 42, 68, 98; assassination of, 166.
Guise, Mary of, ii. 360; married to James V., 360; is delivered of a son, 365; who dies, 370; gives birth to a daughter, 375; mingles in the affairs of government, iii. 64; proposes that her daughter Mary should be sent to France, 64; her designs to supplant Arran, 70; she embarks for France, 70, 383 *n.*; explains her scheme to the French cabinet, 71, 71 *n.*, 383 *n.*; visits England, 72; is appointed regent, 73; proposes to tax every man's estate, but is opposed, 76; she attempts to engage the country in a war with England, 77; she heads a procession on St Giles's day, 82; receives a letter from Knox, 83; summons the Protestant preachers to answer for their conduct, 84; receives a deputation from the barons, 84; temporises with the reformers, 86, 88; openly espouses the cause of the Catholic party, 90; her promises disregarded, 90; her dissimulation, 91; her rage at the proceedings at Perth, 93; agrees to terms which she violates, 94, 95; hopes to surprise the reformers at Cupar Moor, but negotiates, 96; on the advance of the Protestant party she evacuates the capital, 99; issues a proclamation, 101; agrees to a truce, 103; the death of Henry II. of France leads her to more open measures against the reformers, 104; fortifies Leith, 111; retires to Edinburgh castle, 118; her health failing she requests an interview with the leaders of the Protestant party, 120; negotiations fail, 120 her last moments, 120, 121; her character, 121.
Guthrie of Kincaldrum, David, ii. 189.
Gysborne, church of, burnt and destroyed, i. 87.

H

Haco, king of Norway, prepares to invade Scotland, i. 10; his fleet sails from Herlover, 10; arrives at Orkney, 11; afterwards conducts his ships to Ronaldsvoe, 11; exacts and receives tribute from the people of Caithness, 11; proceeds to the Isle of Skye, thence to the Sound of Mull, where he is joined by several Hebridean chiefs, 11; despatches two squadrons to plunder Cantire and Bute, 11; recalls the order to plunder Cantire, 12; receives messages from the Irish Ostmen, who crave his protection against the English invaders, 12; despatches Sigurd on an embassy to them, 13; sails up the Firth of Clyde, and anchors in the Sound of Kilbrannan, 13; Alexander, a barefooted friar, sounds him as to conditions of peace, 13; sends commissioners to treat with the King of Scotland, 13; King of Scotland sends envoys to him, 13; proposals of the Scottish king rejected, 13; he sends another ambassador to the King of Scotland, who returns unsuccessful, 14; he sends a fleet up the Clyde to slay and plunder, 14; part of the fleet destroyed by a storm, 14; he ascribes the storm to enchantment, and to control the power of magic has mass celebrated on one of the Cumbraes, 14; five of his galleys cast ashore, and their crews attacked by the Scots, 15; he sends reinforcements, 14; battle of Largs, 15; re-embarks his troops and sails towards Arran, 17; return of the commissioners from Ireland, 17; is anxious to aid the Irish, but is opposed by his whole army, 17; sails for the Hebrides, 17; severe gale off Islay, 17; arrives in Orkney, 17; grants his troops leave to return home, 17; falls sick, receives extreme unction, names his heir, and expires, 17; cause of the failure of his expedition, 18.
Haco, a Norse baron, slain, 16.
Haddington, iii. 66-69; tournament at, i. 1.
Haig of Bemerside, i. 91.
Hailes, the residence of Bothwell, iii. 343.
Hailes, Hepburn of, earl of Bothwell, ii. 220; rebellion of, 235, 236, 239; growing power of, 245, 246, 249, 253; slain at Flodden, 294.
Hailes, Lord, the historian, remarks of, on Fordun, i. 2 *n.*; omission by, 4 *n.*; inaccuracy of, 6; errors of, 18 *n.*; omission by, 62 *n.*; criticised, 134 *n.*, 142, 145, 192, 245.
Hailes castle, ii. 18.

Hainault, John of, accompanies Edward III., i. 148.
Haliburton, Henry de, i. 55, 81 *n.*
Haliburton, Ralph de, engaged to betray Wallace, i. 81.
Haliburton, Sir Walter, ii. 84.
Haliburton, William, takes Wark castle, ii. 47.
Haliburton, provost of Dundee, iii. 113, 114.
Halidon Hill, battle of, i. 172, 370 *n.*
Hall, John, iii. 337.
Hall, John, one of the assassins of James I., ii. 89, 92, 93.
Hall, Thomas, ii. 92, 93.
Halton, Erskine of, ii. 388.
Hamar, Gilbert, bishop of, i. 13 *n.*
Hamilton, iii. 111, 285, 287, 320.
Hamilton, Sir James, (afterwards lord,) ii. 133, 136, 138, 163, 187.
Hamilton, Sir James, the bastard of Arran, ii. 315, 316, 339, 340, 351, 357, 366, 367.
Hamilton, Lord, Earl of Arran, Duke of Chastelherault, ii. 246, 271; imprisoned by Henry VII., 278; mismanages an expedition to Ireland, 286; returns to Scotland, 297, 301 *n.*; leagues with England, 305; returns to Scotland; 306; his opposition to the Earl of Angus, 315, 329; joins the Earl of Angus, 337; defeats the Earl of Lennox, 339; favours the Reformation, iii. 3; is chosen regent, 4; his power confirmed by a remarkable discovery, 5; his adherence to Protestantism, 9; abjures his religion, 17; retires before the invasion under the Earl of Hertford, 23; discussions with the queen-mother, 25; marches into England, but through treason has to fly, 27; defeats the English at Ancrum, 30; is again the victim of treason among the nobles, 34, 35 *n.*; proceeds against the assassins of Cardinal Beaton, 49; negotiates with them, 51; marches against the Duke of Somerset, and is defeated at Pinkie, 56-62; succeeds in expelling the English out of the country, 70; resigns the regency, 73, 73 *n.*; is created Duke of Chastelherault, 73; summoned to the assistance of Mary of Guise, 93, 95; grows lukewarm in the cause of the Congregation, 101; they endeavour to seduce him from his loyalty, 107, 124; threatens his brother with death, 129; Mary's distrust of him, 138; views of the Catholic party with regard to, 158; accused of treason by his son, 161, 162; opposed to Mary's marriage with Darnley, 192; rebels against Mary, 209; supports Mary against the confederates, 285, 340; negotiates with them, 357, 358; his death, iv. 20.
Hamilton, Lord Arbroath, afterwards duke of, iii. 358, iv. 20; is proscribed and flies to Flanders, 21, 41, 69; returns to the Borders, 72; is reconciled to Earl of Angus, and conspires against Earl of Arran, 103; conspiracy of, successful, 106; is pardoned by the king, 107, 175.
Hamilton, James, son of Earl of Arran, iii. 51, 51 *n.*
Hamilton, Lord John, iv. 194, 254, 255.
Hamilton, Lord Claud, iii. 285, 287, 294, 340, iv. 20, 21, 69, 72; conspires against the Earl of Arran, 103, 147.
Hamilton, archbishop of St Andrews, iii. 59, 71, 73, 73 *n.*, 129, 163, 231; conspires against Darnley, 237, 260, 294, 308, 312, 316, 320, 339.
Hamilton of Kincavil, James, ii. 366.
Hamilton, Sir Patrick, ii. 271, 278, 316, 342.
Hamilton, Sir William, iii. 9, 13.
Hamilton, Patrick, abbot of Ferne, the earliest Scottish reformer, arraigned and put to death, ii. 341, 342, 342 *n.*
Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, James, the assassin of Regent Moray, iii. 319, 320, iv. 9, 26.
Hamilton, Arthur, a brother of Bothwellhaugh, iv. 21.
Hamilton, abbot of Paisley, iii. 10, 17, 19.
Hamilton of Finnart, ii. 316.
Hamilton of Morton, Arthur, iv. 20, 21.
Hamilton, abbot of Kilwinning, iii. 71, 162, 212, 279, 295.
Hamilton, Thomas, Lord Advocate, iv. 239, 253, 254.
Hampshire, i. 89.
Hampton Court, iii. 304.
Hanse Towns, trade with the, ii. 383 *n.*
Harbottle castle taken by Bruce, i. 135.
Hardelston, Sir Richard, ii. 259.
Hardenburg, Edward I. embarks at, i. 67.
Hardyng the chronicler, ii. 102.
Harlaw, battle of, ii. 40-42; popular air of, 242.
Harlaw, stronghold of, iii. 315, 317.
Harlow, a Protestant preacher, iii. 82.
Harrington, Sir John, ii. 143.
Harris, Sir Herbert, ii. 85.
Harrow, iv. 131.
Harry, the Great, ii. 282.
Hartela, Sir Andrew, captures the Earl of Lancaster, i. 143.
Hartela, earl of Carlisle, enters into correspondence with Bruce, i. 145; is discovered and punished, 146.
Hartlepool, sack of, i. 110.
Hastings, John de, descendant of the Earl of Huntingdon, maintains that the kingdom of Scotland was divisible, i. 37.
Hatfield, iv. 304, 307.
Hatton, Sir Christopher, iv. 132-134, 136, 137, 144.
Hautpile, Hugh, a French naval officer, i. 185.
Hawthornden, i. 184.
Hawthornden, Drummond of, ii. 42.
Hawking in the early ages, i. 309.
Hay, Andrew, iv. 43, 46, 47, 75.
Hay, Baron, ii. 234.
Hay, bishop of Ross, ii. 355.
Hay, Captain, iii. 230.
Hay, Master of Requests, iii. 201.
Hay of Tallo, iii. 237, 278, 279, 282, 288.
Hay, Gilbert de, i. 6 *n.*
Hay, Sir Thomas, ii. 9.
Haye, Sir Hugh de, i. 88, 91.
Haye, Nicholas de la, i. 56.
Haye, David de la, constable of Scotland, i. 192.
Haye, Gilbert de la, i. 88, 91, 92, 98, 102.
Hayward the historian, ii. 102.
Hearne the antiquary, i. 110 *n.*
Hebrides, invasion of, by Scottish chiefs, i. 10; barbarous conduct of the invaders, 10; annexed to the crown, ii. 367.
Hector the bastard, ii. 341.

Helsey, Sir James de, a French knight, ii. 25.
Hemingford the historian, i. 33, 52 *n.*, 64.
Hemingius, iv. 172.
Henderson, Andrew, iv. 291-295.
Hennage, Mr, iii. 365.
Henry I. of England, i. 265, 319, 320.
Henry II. of England, i. 246, 257, 265, 267, 285, 297, 318, 319.
Henry III. of England claims to be lord paramount of Scotland, i. 2; invades Scotland to enforce his claim, 2; the armies meet at Ponteland, 2; an armistice proposed, which is followed by a treaty, 3; waves all claim of homage from the Scottish king, 3; agrees that the marriage of his daughter with Alexander III. should be carried into effect, 3; sends a letter to Rome, in which he represents Scotland to be a fief of England, 3; he resolves on an expedition to the Holy Land, 3; the marriage of his daughter with Alexander solemnised, 4; proposes to Alexander that he should render fealty to him for the kingdom of Scotland, 4; mortifying reply which he receives, 4; sends Geoffrey de Langley into Scotland as guardian to the young king, 5; procures from Pope Innocent IV. a grant of the twentieth of the ecclesiastical revenues of Scotland, 5; despatches the Earl of Leicester on a secret mission into Scotland, 5; sends the Earl of Gloucester and his secretary to the Scottish court, 5; the success of their mission induces him to assemble an army with which he enters Scotland, 6; he meets the king of Scotland at Roxburgh castle, 6; assumes the title of "principal counsellor to the illustrious King of Scotland," 6; he returns to England, 6; he prohibits the return to England of Gamelin, bishop of St Andrews, 7; entertains the King and Queen of Scotland at Oxford, Woodstock, and London, 7; again invites them to the English court, 9; tries to prevent a rupture between Alexander III. and Haco, king of Norway, 9; attempts to levy a tenth upon the benefices of Scotland, 19; his death, 20; his character, 20.
Henry IV. of England supplants Richard II. on the throne, ii. 10, 12; assumes the title of lord-superior of Scotland, and invades the country, 14; his letter on the battle of Nisbet Moor, 23; conspiracy of the Percies against him, 28; encourages peace with Scotland, 30; conspiracies against, defeated, 31, 32; takes James I. prisoner, 33; his amicable intentions regarding Scotland, 36; his death, 43.
Henry V. of England, valour of, at the battle of Shrewsbury, ii. 28; ascends the throne, and inclined to keep peace with Scotland, 43, 44; his principles of good faith towards Scotland, 46; his war with France, 46-48; his death, 48; noticed in connexion with Richard II., 114-118.
Henry VI. of England, ii. 79, 122, 143, 150, 154; extraordinary letter of, to James II., 167, 168; his restoration to power, 172; proposes a prolongation of a truce with Scotland, 177; drives the Duke of York from England, 178; defeated by the Yorkists at Bloreheath, 179; taken captive at the battle of Northampton, 179; his treaty with James II., 184; defeated at the battle of Wakefield, 190; takes refuge in Scotland, 190; engages the services of the Earl of Angus, 192-194.
Henry VII. of England, ii. 230, 231; his intrigues in Scotland, 236, 254, 255; James IV. supports the plot of Perkin Warbeck against, 259; his truce with Scotland, 264; negotiations of, regarding the marriage of his daughter with James IV., 265; his encouragement of the Cabots, 266; renews his matrimonial negotiations, 268, 269; his foreign alliance, 276; his jealousy of James IV., 278; his death, 279, 282.
Henry VIII. of England, ii. 276; his accession to the throne, 279; his treaty with James IV., 279; his ambitious designs on France, 281; disputes with James IV., 282-287; his message to James IV., 287, 288; his intrigues in Scotland, 300; his proposals to the Scottish queen, 300, 301, 304, 307; is desirous of peace with Scotland, 306; his assistance sought by the Queen of Scotland, 307; resumes his intrigues with the Scottish nobles, 307-310, 313, 314, 318, 319; his haughty communication to the Scottish Parliament, 320; he declares war against France, 321; orders the invasion of Scotland, 321; abates his pretensions, 322; rejects a truce which should include France, 323; foments Border warfare, 324; his intrigues compel Regent Albany to abandon the invasion of England, 327; intrigues with the Earl of Angus, 328-330, 334; his reproachful letter to his sister, 335; congratulates the Earl of Angus on his success, 339; his policy of corruption in Scotland, 346; invites James V. to shake off the yoke of Rome, 355; is confirmed as the head of the Church of England, 356; refuses a passage through England to James V. and his queen, 358; his position towards the Papal See, 359; his negotiations with James V., 364-370; invites James V. to a personal conference, 371; declares war against Scotland, and publishes a manifesto setting forth his reason for doing so, 372; negotiations with Scotland to procure the marriage of his son with Queen Mary, iii. 1, 2; demands the surrender of Cardinal Beaton, and of the Scottish fortresses, 6, 7; his demands excite universal indignation, 11; his "secret device" with his Scottish partisans, 14; his unjustifiable seizure of Scottish trading ships, 16; his threatening letter to the magistrates of Edinburgh, 17; plots the assassination of Cardinal Beaton, 22; the insincerity of his professions of peace demonstrated, 25; his rage against the Earl of Angus, 30; his intrigues against Scotland, 31-51; his death, 52; cruelty and impolicy of, towards Scotland, 365 *n.*
Henry, prince of Scotland, descendants of, claim the crown, i. 34.
Henry of Transtamarre, many Scots serve in the army of, i. 224.
Henry, Prince, son of David I., i. 245.
Henry II. of France supports the cause of Scotland against England, iii. 52-54; approves of the marriage of the Dauphin with Queen Mary, 67; stipulates with England

in favour of Scotland, 70; negotiates with Mary of Guise, 70, 71; induces Mary of Guise to assist him against Scotland, 77; negotiations regarding the marriage of Queen Mary with the Dauphin, 78; truce with England, 81; his proposals to Mary of Guise, 90; his death, 104.
Henry III. of France, iv. 7, 19; his efforts in favour of Queen Mary of Scotland, 146; rejects the proposals of James VI., 162.
Henry IV. of France, iv. 212, 239; letter of Queen Elizabeth to, 311.
Henry, abbot of Arbroath, carries to Edward I. Baliol's renunciation of his homage, i. 44.
Hepburn, Sir Patrick, slain at Nesbit Moor, ii. 23.
Hepburn of Hailes, Patrick, ii. 140.
Hepburn, Adam, master of Hailes, ii. 196.
Hepburn, prior of St Andrews, ii. 299.
Hepburn, Captain, iii. 170.
Hepburn of Bolton, iii. 237, 279, 282, 283.
Hepburn of Riccarton, iii. 285.
Herbert, Lord, his observations, iii. 23.
Hereford, Earl of, at Melrose, i. 7.
Hereford, Earl of, exchanged by Bruce for his wife, sister, daughter, the Bishop of Glasgow, and the Earl of Mar, 123.
Heriot, the reformer, iii. 126.
Hermitage castle, iii. 228.
Herwold, a Norwegian chief, ii. 270.
Heron, Sir John, iv. 7.
Heron, Sir William, ii. 49, 289.
Heron, Lady, ii. 289.
Heron, an English murderer, ii. 283, 287.
Herries of Terregles hanged by the Earl of Douglas, ii. 153.
Herries, Lord, implores Queen Mary not to marry Bothwell, iii. 251; supports the cause of Mary against the confederates, 260, 261, 264, 266; gives in his adherence to the king's government, 279; joins Mary on her escape from Lochleven, 285; accompanies Mary in her flight to England, 288, 289, 292; chosen one of Mary's commissioners, 295, 304; prepares to oppose Regent Moray, 308; is imprisoned in Edinburgh castle, 309; supports the cause of Mary, 316, 327, 332, 338, iv. 13; is opposed to the Gowrie faction, 49, 51; protests against the insolence of Queen Elizabeth, 147.
Hertford, Earl of, invades Scotland, iii. 22, 23; is compelled to retire, 23; is made acquainted with the plot against the life of Cardinal Beaton, 32; invades Scotland, 35, 36; his devastating cruelty, 37; his retreat, 37; invades Scotland, 56; battle of Edmonstone Edge, 57; battle of Pinkie, 59-62; his retreat, 63; his manifesto to the Scottish governor, 66; again invades Scotland, 68; is obliged to abandon his designs against Scotland, 70.
Hertford castle, queen of David II. dies in, i. 210.
Hewison, John, anathema of, iv. 92.
Hexham, the monastery of, burnt by the Scottish army, i. 44; sacked by Wallace's soldiers, 57; their avarice, 57; striking incident, 57.
Hexham, town of, burnt by Bruce, i. 110.
"Hiegate," the purpose of, iii. 236.
Highlanders, their contempt of life, ii. 3.
Highland combat at Inverlochy, iii. 25.
Highlands, the unruly condition of the, in the reign of James I., ii. 71; overthrow of the power of the chiefs, 71; enactments regarding property in the, 77; visited by James IV., 267; disturbances in the, 312; visited by James V., 353.
Hislop, an English sheriff, puts to death a woman for aiding Wallace to escape, i. 49; is slain by Wallace, 49.
Historical remarks on the death of Richard II., i. 96-119, 119 *n.*
Hoby, Sir Edward, iv. 85, 89, 94.
Holder, a pirate and freebooter, ii. 38.
Holland, relations with, ii. 122.
Hollanders, plunder of Scottish ships by, ii. 279.
Holstein, Duke of, iv. 267.
Holt, a Jesuit, iv. 61, 81, 103, 108.
Holy Island, ii. 326, iii. 6.
Holyrood, monastery of, Scottish Council meet in, i. 221.
Holyrood, James II. crowned at, ii. 121.
Holyrood, royal chapel at, iii. 260.
Holy Sepulchre, Bruce requests his heart to be deposited in the, i. 158.
Holywell Haugh, meeting of competitors for the crown of Scotland at, i. 82.
Home, Sir Alexander, ii. 160.
Home of Polwarth, George, ii. 215.
Home, Lord, chamberlain, defeated by the English, ii. 288; at the battle of Flodden, 292, 293; sides with the English party against Albany, 302-308; is tried and executed, 309.
Home, Sir George, ii. 288; execution of, 309.
Home, Lord, iii. 316.
Home, castle of, ii. 304, 312.
Homildon, battle of, ii. 23, 24.
Horses, numerous in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, i. 246.
Horseshoes nailed on a woman's feet, ii. 72.
Horsley, Rogers, governor of Berwick castle, surrenders it, i. 134.
Horton, William de, sent on a secret mission into Scotland, i. 8.
Howard, Sir Edward, ii. 282.
Howard, Lord Thomas, ii. 282, 290.
Howard, Sir Edmund, ii. 292.
Howard, Lord William, ii. 354, 355, 355 *n.*, 356, iii. 80, 300.
Howard, Lord Henry, iv. 307, 308 *n.*, 310.
Howard, Lord High-Admiral, iv. 312-314.
"Hucheon of the Awle Ryall," i. 295.
Hudson, a favourite of James VI., iv. 185.
Huguenots, the, iii. 136, 171, 188.
"Hugh of the Royal Court," i. 295.
Hull, ii. 36.
Hulle, a murderer, i. 208.
Humber, the country north of the, ravaged by Bruce, i. 145.
Hume, Sir Alexander, iv. 253.
Hume, Sir David, ii. 160.
Hume, Sir George, iv. 187, 191, 205.
Hume, Sir James, of Coldingknowes, iv. 1, 17, 107, 169.
Hume of Fast castle, Patrick, ii. 247.
Hume, Master of, ii. 236; rebels against James III., 239.
Hume, Alexander, the chamberlain, ii. 247, 249, 250.

Hume, Lord, ii. 220.
Hume, Lord, a supporter of Queen Mary, iii. 196, 204; deserts her, 254, 264, 266, 286, 288.
Hume, Lord, iii. 325, 361, 362, iv. 60, 102, 194, 201, 204.
Hume, Captain, iii. 336.
Hume, William, iv. 191, 230.
Hume, Mr David, a Scottish preacher, iv. 97.
Hume of Manderston, iv. 31.
Hume of Manderston, David, iv. 180.
Hume, Alexander, provost of Edinburgh, iv. 197.
Hume, John, a follower of Regent Moray, iii. 320.
Hume the historian, i. 91 *n.*
Hume castle, iii. 209.
Hungary, Queen of, ii. 350.
Hunsdown, Lord, iii. 313, 322, 324, 343, iv. 32 35, 68, 84, 85, 90, 94, 165, 183.
Hunter, a Protestant martyr, iii. 21.
Huntingdon, honour of, granted to Alexander III., i. 7.
Huntingdon, Earl of, iii. 302, 313, 352.
Huntingdon, David, earl of, his descendants claim the crown of Scotland, i. 25; seal of, 320; anecdote of, 320.
Huntly, Earl of, ii. 237, 240, 253, 258, 276, 277, 291; is slain at Flodden, 293.
Huntly, Earl of, ii. 296, 300, 310, 328, 357; accuses the Master of Forbes of a design to shoot James III., 360; one of the council of regency, iii. 46; made chancellor, 50; his challenge to the Duke of Somerset, 58, 59; taken prisoner at the battle of Pinkie, 65; escapes, 75 *n.*; is stripped of his office and banished, 75; he joins the reformers, 119, 165; heads the Romish party, 165; rebels and is killed, 166, 167.
Huntly, Earl of, iii. 221, 222, 224, 230; conspires against Darnley, 237, 240, 247; deserts the confederate lords, 260, 261; submits to Regent Moray, 278, 293, 307-309, 325, 332, 340, 357, 358, 360.
Huntly, Earl of, heads the Catholic faction, iv. 162; savage murder of the Earl of Moray by, 182, 183; has to fly, 183; he surrenders and is pardoned, 184, 190; his treatment as a Papist drives him to rebel, 221; battle of Glenlivat, 223, 224, 229-231; his return from the Continent, 246, 260; his recantation, 260; reconciliation with the Earl of Argyle, 310.
Huntly, Countess of, iii. 186.
Hussites, ii. 123.
Hutton Hall, iv. 165.

I

Ilda, daughter of William the Lion, i. 34.
Inchaffray, Abbot of, ii. 294.
Inchbelly, Bridge of, ii. 145.
Inch of Perth, combat at, ii. 4, 5, iv. 47.
Inchcolm, Abbot of, ii. 81.
Inchconnal, castle of, ii. 272.
Inchkeith, iii. 69.
Inchmahome, monastery of, iii. 64, 66.
Inchmurdoch, palace of the Bishop of St Andrews, i. 213.
Inchmurrin, iv. 203.
Inglewood Forest, i. 56.
Inglis, Alexander, bishop of Dunkeld, ii. 230.
Inglis, Sir James, ii. 289, 300.
Inglis, Sir James, abbot of Culross, ii. 350.
Innergail, ii. 272.
Innermeith, Lord, iii. 325.
Innerquharity, ii. 140.
Innerwick, Laird of, iii. 288.
Innkeepers, their grievances in the reign of James I., ii. 67.
Innocent IV., Pope, i. 5.
Inveravon, castle of, ii. 164.
Inveresk, Wishart preaches at, iii. 42, 58.
Inverlochy, battle of, ii. 79.
Inverlochy, fight of the clans at, iii. 25.
Inverness, army of Donald of the Isles at, ii. 40.
Ireland, Edward Bruce crowned King of, i. 127.
Ireland, Richard Ludelay de, ii. 259.
Irvine, the capitulation of, i. 51.
Irvine, Edward I. encamps at the town of, i. 69.
Irvine, Sir Alexander, slain at Harlaw, ii. 41, 241 *n.*
Isabella, daughter of James I., ii. 95.
Isabella, countess of Buchan, places the crown on Bruce's head, i. 89, 365 *n.*
Isabella, queen of England, aids in deposing her husband, i. 148.
Isabella, sister of James II., married to Francis, duke of Bretagne, ii. 134.
Isabella of Spain, ii. 265.
Isobel, daughter of Earl of Athole, i. 1 *n.*
Isles, Western, claimed by Haco, king of Norway, i. 9.
Isles, Alexander, earl of Ross, and lord of the, ii. 39, 70, 71, 142.
Isles, John of the, declines to attend parliament, i. 223; married to a daughter of the Steward, 226; defies the royal authority, 227; but submits to the king in person, 228, 380 *n.*
Isles, Donald of the, rebellion of, ii. 39.
Italian league, the, ii. 283.

J

James I. is declared king, ii. 35; terms on which he regains his liberty, 49, 379 *n.*; marries Johanna Beaufort, 49; returns to Scotland, 49; the advantages which he derived from his long captivity, 50; is with his queen crowned at Scone, 52; deplorable condition of the country, 51; arrests Murdoch, late governor, his son, and twenty-six of the principal nobles, 58; severity with which he punished crime, 60, 63; agrees to the betrothal of his daughter to the Dauphin of France, 64; his relations with foreign powers, 64; he induces many of the Highland chiefs to attend parliament, when they are arrested and punished, 70; his unbending severity, illustrative examples of, 71; number of parliaments held during his reign, 72; his queen delivered of twin sons, 78; his indifference to the persecutions of the Catholic clergy, 83; deprives the Earl of March of his estates, 84; the estates of the Earl of Mar revert to the crown, 85; seizes the earl-

dom of Strathern, 87; is defied by Sir Robert Graham, 89; his confidence, 89; resolves on spending the Christmas at Perth, 89; is warned of his danger by a Highland woman, 89, 90; attempts to elude his assassins, is discovered and slain, 91, 92; his character, and characteristics of his reign, 93-96; buried at Perth, 95; his children, 95, 96.

James II., his accession to the throne, ii. 119; his age, 119; his coronation at Holyrood, 121; takes refuge in Edinburgh castle, 121; carried off by his mother to Stirling castle, 123; is committed to the keeping of Sir Alexander Livingston, 127; is carried off by Chancellor Crichton to Edinburgh, 128; begins to take an interest in public affairs, 142; by the advice of Charles VII. proposals are made to Mary of Gueldres as his future queen, 142; his cautious policy towards the nobility, 142; arrival of his future queen, 144; holds a tournament at Stirling, 145; is married, 145; arrests the heads of the Livingston faction, 145; hangs some of them, 146, 146 *n.*; takes Lochmaben castle, 151; deprives the Earl of Douglas of his lieutenancy, 153; enraged with the earl, he negotiates with him on his conduct, 156; invites him to Stirling under a royal protection, 156; remonstrance and altercation, 157; he stabs Douglas, 157; marches against the Earl of Crawford, 159; summons his army to meet at Pentland Moor, 160; proceeds against the castle of Douglas, when the earl sues for pardon, 160; his measures to re-establish order, 164; maintains the independence of the Scottish Church against the pretensions of Rome, 176; invades England, but retires on the remonstrances of Henry VI., 179; prepares to assist Henry against the Yorkists, 180; besieges Roxburgh castle, 185; killed by the bursting of a piece of ordnance, 185; his character, 186; his children, 187; is buried in Holyrood abbey, 188; surnamed "James with the fiery face," 187.

James III. crowned at Kelso, ii. 188; proposed marriage of, with the King of Norway's daughter, 190; is carried off by Lord Boyd to Edinburgh, 196; approves of his conduct, 197; becomes alive to the state of tutelage in which he is held, 201; married to Margaret, princess of Denmark, 201; his position and character, 204; intends to bear an expedition against Brittany, 208; renounces it on the birth of a son, 209; prosperity of his reign, 212; patronises architects, musicians, &c., 213; assembles his army for the invasion of England, 221; seized by the nobles and committed to Edinburgh castle, 222, 388 *n.*; is charged with the design of poisoning the Duke of Albany, 225; regains his authority, 226; death of his queen, 231; throws off his indolence, and proceeds to take steps for the maintenance of the authority by the crown, 234; a portion of the nobility, with his son James at their head, rebel against him, 235; retreats north, assembles an army, and meets the insurgents at Blackness, 237; negotiations, 237; has again to take the field, 239; battle of Little Canglar, 239; flight and death, 240; his interment, 241; his character, 241-244; his children, 244.

James IV., his birth, ii. 209, 244 *n.*; his betrothal, 210; his affections estranged from his father, 233; flattered by a party, he heads the insurgent army, 235; is present at the battle of Little Canglar, 239; his accession to the throne and coronation, 245; resolves on conciliating the aristocracy, 250; defeats the Earl of Lennox, 250; his remorse for the death of his father, 254; his jealousy of the interference of the court of Rome, 255; he pacifies the Highlands and Isles, 258; welcomes Perkin Warbeck, 259; declares war against Henry VII., 263; invades England, 263; makes peace with England, 265; encourages his navy, 266; indefatigable in visiting every district of the country, 267; engages to espouse the Princess Margaret, daughter of Henry VII., 268; meets her at Newbattle, 270; revelry in her honour, 271; is married at Holyrood, 271; his foreign relations, 276; entertains his guests at Holyrood, 278; his coldness towards Henry VII., 278; builds the *Great St Michael*, 279; encourages the introduction of printing into Scotland, 280; cordiality of his alliance with France, 281; prepares for war with England, 283; is greatly influenced by the artful proceedings of Anne of Brittany, 285; writes to Henry VIII., commanding him to desist in the war against France, 287, 287 *n.*, 288; before joining his army visits Linlithgow, 288; a strange visitant, 288, 289; marches to Flodden, 290; rejects all counsel, 291; battle of Flodden, and his death, 290-294, 294 *n.*, 398; his character, 294, 295.

James V., birth of, ii. 288; is crowned at Scone, 296; is committed to the care of a council, 303; his person taken possession of by the Earl of Angus, 337; he escapes to Stirling castle, 344, 344 *n.*; his character, 345; the King of the Commons, 346; resolves to liberate Scotland from the influence of the English court, 346; banishes the Earl of Angus and confiscates his estates, 348; he suppresses with rigour the disorders of the Borders, 348; by conciliation he preserves the peace of the Western Isles, 350; his preference of the clergy, 351; institutes the College of Justice, 351; is entertained by the Earl of Athole on a scale of unprecedented magnificence, 353; the intrigues of King Henry of England keep the Borders in commotion, 354; is presented with orders of nobility by the courts of England, France, and Germany, 354; declares his determination to support the Catholic faith, 354; encourages the persecution of the reformers, 355; Henry VIII. appeals to him to shake off the yoke of the Papacy, 355, 355 *n.*; Scottish ambassadors in France contract a marriage for him with the daughter of the Duke of Vendosme, 356; sails from Leith to France to see his affianced bride, 357; transfers his affections to the Princess Magdalen, only daughter of Francis I., 357; is married at Notre Dame, 357; is refused permission to return to his kingdom through England, 358; embarks from Dieppe and arrives at Leith, 358;

death of his queen, and his marriage to Mary of Guise, 260; conspiracies against his life, 260; supports the clergy in their persecution of the Protestants, 362; negotiations with Henry VIII., 364; sails round Scotland, 365, 366, 366 *n.*; a son born to him, 365; another conspiracy against his life, 366; his mental terrors, 367; his policy in support of the Catholic Church, 367; whole confiscation of the estates of the nobility and island chiefs, 368; invites foreign artisans to settle in Scotland, 370; encourages learning, 370; war with England, 371; assembles his army at the Borough Muir, 373; marches to Fala Muir, 373; the nobility opposed to the war, 373; he disbands his army and returns to Edinburgh, 374; a fresh levy is made, but dissensions arising from the command being given to his minion Oliver Sinclair, the force is routed at Solway Moss, 374; he returns to Falkland, and dies of a broken heart, 375; his character, 375; his children, 375.

James VI., his birth, iii. 224; his baptism, 231; a confederacy of the nobles formed to protect him, 246-250, 252-263; his coronation, 269; disputes regarding his right to the crown during the life of his mother, 271; his first speech in parliament, 340; deputations with England regarding, 352; his interview with Killigrew, the English ambassador, iv. 4; he begins to take an interest in the affairs of government, 11; has an interview with the Earl of Argyle, who complains of the oppressive conduct of Regent Morton, 12; supersedes Morton in the government, a council of twelve appointed to assist him, 13; his person seized by Morton's friends, 15; opens parliament in person in Stirling castle, 16; his command to Lord Lindsay, 16; his acceptance of the government confirmed by parliament, 17; he tries to make peace between the rival factions, 17; suggestion of Queen Mary to carry him off to France, 19; the use which Morton makes of the possession of his person, 20; in a letter requests the General Assembly to abstain from debating the polity of the Kirk, 22; the Assembly in reply appoint a deputation to wait upon him, 22; partiality for Esmé Stewart, 22; his hatred of the house of Hamilton, 22; he is entertained by the civic authorities of Edinburgh,—religion and Bacchus, 23; he confers honours and emoluments on Esmé Stewart, 23; his poverty, 24; labours to convert Stewart, earl of Lennox, to the Protestant religion, 25; rumoured projects to carry him off to France, 25; his reception of the English ambassador, 26; is threatened with loss of the English succession, 27; his fickleness, 27-29; his stormy interview with the English ambassador, 30; listens to the accusation of Morton by Captain Stewart, 31; his answer to Randolph, the English envoy, 32; conspiracy to seize him, and remove him to England, 34; his patronage of Morton's enemies, 39; opens the parliament of 1581, 39; his intimation to the Earl of Mar, &c., 39; refuses to pardon those implicated in the murder of his father, Darnley, 39; memorial of his mother to Elizabeth respecting his title to the English throne, 40; proposal made to him by "The Association," 40; his strong predilections for Episcopacy, 40; his interview with the Presbyterian ministers, 42; his determination to support the pretensions of Montgomery to the bishopric of Glasgow, 43; he receives an envoy from the Duke of Guise, 43; he is rebuked for doing so by the ministers of Edinburgh, 44; directs the ministers of the Kirk to present a list of their grievances, 46; his reception of a deputation from that body, 46; renounces publicly his intention of innovating on the established religion, 47; his hilarity at the Inch of Perth, 48; seizure of his person by the Ruthven conspirators, 49; he is sternly rebuked by the Master of Glammis, 49; declares that he is forcibly detained, 51; compulsion put upon his actions by Gowrie and his associates, 52; he vindicates the character of Stewart, earl of Lennox, 52; the bondage in which he is kept by the Gowrie confederates, 55; an attempt to liberate him proves abortive, 55; his aptitude in kingcraft, 58; his controversy with certain Scottish divines, 58; is reproved by one of them for swearing, 58; the spirit in which he takes the rebuke, 58; his command to the magistrates of Edinburgh, 59; his reception of Queen Elizabeth's remonstrances, 60; his efforts to have the meeting of parliament in 1583 delayed, 60; his secret interview with the English ambassador, 63, 64; sends a deputation to London, 64; his load of debt, 64; his profound affliction on being informed of the death of the Duke of Lennox, 65; his repugnance to "The Association," 65; throws himself into St Andrews, 66; recovers his freedom, 66; issues a proclamation declaring the "raid of Ruthven" to be treason, 66; publishes a declaration regarding the death of the Duke of Lennox, 66; summons Lawson, a preacher, to appear before him, 67; his strange conduct on the occasion, 67; his familiarity with the ministerial deputation, 67, 68; his energetic proceedings against the rebellious nobles, 68; holds a secret conference with Graham of Fintry, 68; his dissimulation towards the English ambassador, 68, 69; the leaders of the Ruthven faction submit to his clemency, 70; welcomes with joy the son of the late Duke of Lennox, 71; abortive conspiracy of the banished lords, 72-74; his determination to uphold Episcopacy, 78; his interview with Davison, the English envoy, 80; his proposal to Graham of Peartree, 91; his pedantic letter to Lord Beughley, 94; his persecution of the Kirk, 97; his pastimes, 98; his readiness to form a league with Elizabeth, 98; his toast to his favourite hound, 99; a Border fray interrupts the negotiations with Elizabeth, 100; the reproaches of Wotton, the English ambassador, cause him to shed tears, 101; becomes aware of the intrigues of Wotton, and orders his arrest, 105; he is besieged in Stirling castle by the banished lords, 106; negotiates with them, 106; forgives them, 106; his interview with Lord Hamil-

ton, 106; concludes a league with Elizabeth, 107; his speech on Popish leagues, 108; despatches Sir William Keith on a friendly mission to the English court, 108; his reception of Randolph, the English ambassador, 108; he is blamed for having concluded the league with England, 109; receives an admonitory letter from Elizabeth, 110; it excites his anger and disgust, 110; the terms to which he binds himself by the articles of the league, 110; his interview with Archibald Douglas, 111; his remarks on the murder of his father, 111; his fruitless efforts to save the life of his mother, Mary, 146; he asks the advice of the Earl of Bothwell, 147; that nobleman's reply, 147; he writes a letter, and despatches an envoy to Elizabeth in behalf of Mary, 147, 148; his pusillanimous conduct, 148; he requests the ministers of the Kirk to pray for his mother, 149; he addresses one of the recusant ministers from the gallery of the High Church, 149; is informed of his mother's execution, 159; his heartless expressions on that event, 159; refuses to receive an envoy from Elizabeth, 160; his embassies to foreign courts, 163; he attains his majority, 163; his endeavours restore peace amongst all classes, 163; he feasts his nobles in Holyrood, 163; the nobles urge him to immediate war with England, 164; his tortuous policy, 164; continues firm in his opposition to Spain, 165; proceeds against Lord Maxwell, 166; is congratulated for his energy by Elizabeth, 166; her promises to him, 166; she disappoints him, 166; his anger at being duped, 167; description of his court, and trying situation of, with regard to the nobles, 167; is informed of the treasonable designs of the Catholic lords, 168; his leniency towards them, 168; they rise in insurrection, 169; he assembles an army against them, 169; carries everything before him to Aberdeen, 169; his mild treatment of the insurgent nobles condemned by the Kirk, 169; his marriage with Anne of Denmark, 170; he resolves to proceed to Denmark in person, 171; characteristic epistle on his departure, 171; sets sail from Leith, 172; arrives at Upsal, 172; is introduced to his bride, 172; a sample of Scottish courtship, 172; is married in the Church of Upsal, 172; returns to Scotland, 172; his dispute with the clergy regarding the coronation of the queen, 172; tranquillity of Scotland during his absence in Denmark, 173; reforms his court, 175; he appeases the irritation of Lord Hamilton, 175; he endeavours to restore peace in Europe, 176; sends commissioners to the continental princes, 177; requests Elizabeth for a loan, 177; she sends him the order of the Garter, 177; sides with Elizabeth against the Puritans, 178; is equally opposed to the Catholic faction, 179; he receives large sums of money from Elizabeth, 179; his crusade against witchcraft, 180, 181; turbulence of the nobility, 182; is attacked by Bothwell in his palace of Holyrood, 182; his supposed connivance with the murder of the Earl of Moray, 183; his suspicious clemency to the principal in the murder, 184; the effects caused thereby, 184; his policy to disperse the higher nobility, 185; the difficulties of his position, 185; his concessions to the Kirk, 185; he consents to the establishment of Presbyterianism, 185; discovers the plot of the Spanish blanks, 187; he orders a Catholic agent to be put to the torture, 187; his spirited conduct at this crisis, 188; his violent reception of Bowes, the English ambassador, 189; Elizabeth strives to appease his anger, 189; he is urged on by Elizabeth to stringent measures against the Catholic lords, 190; orders the immediate trial and execution of Graham of Fintry, 190; suppresses the Catholic movement in the north, 190, 191; returns in triumph, 191; gives an audience to the English envoy, Lord Burgh, 191; his peremptory language respecting the shelter given to Bothwell in England, 191; is assailed from the pulpit for his clemency to the Catholic lords, 193; will not abet the persecuting measures of the Kirk, 193; his powerlessness to enforce the law against the higher nobles, 194; his isolation amidst his difficulties, 195; he reinstates Maitland in the office of chancellor, 195; he favours the Catholic lords, 196; he is made prisoner by Bothwell in Holyrood, 197; his spirited appeal to Bothwell, 197; the citizens of Edinburgh rush to his rescue, 197; he commands them to disperse, 197; Bothwell accused of using witchcraft against him, 201; his attempt to escape frustrated, 201; he compromises with Bothwell, 202; the levity with which he conceals his design to escape, 203; a movement begins in his favour, 203; he receives a letter from Elizabeth regarding his refusal to prosecute the Catholic lords, 204; his terms to Bothwell, 204; favours the Catholic party, 205; resolves to restore general peace, 206; he opposes the persecuting measures of the Kirk, 206; Bothwell rejecting the royal mercy, conspires afresh against him, 208; the three Catholic earls supplicate to be put upon their trial, 208; the Kirk urge him to refuse such a request, 209; altercation of, with the commissioners of the Kirk, 209; interdicts the trial of the Catholic lords at Perth, 210; his moderate policy in dealing with them, 210, 211; it dissatisfies both parties, 211; stringent measures of, against Bothwell and his friends, 212; receives a scornful letter from Elizabeth, 212; he dissembles his chagrin, 213; a son is born to him, 215; he commits him to the charge of the Earl of Mar, 215; discovers and defeats another plot of Bothwell, 215; addresses the people in the High Church, 215; defeats Bothwell, 216; adopts rigorous measures against the Catholic lords, 216; despatches an embassy to Elizabeth, 216; also a private epistle, 216, 217; preparations of, to celebrate the christening of the prince, 219; his letter to Elizabeth respecting the christening, 220; assembles a convention, and prepares to attack the Catholic lords, 220; advances northward, and destroys Strathbogie castle, 225; grants an amnesty to the commons who had been in

rebellion, 225 ; makes arrangements to secure the permanent peace of the Highlands, 225 ; he is disappointed in the promises of pecuniary support made by Elizabeth, 226 ; his rage at her parsimonious treatment of him, 227 ; his pecuniary embarrassments, 227 ; differences with his queen, 227, 228 ; his exertions to subdue the various factions, 229, 230 ; he discovers Catholic intrigues, 230, 231 ; will not consent to the torturing of their agent, 231 ; refuses to confiscate the estates of the fugitive Catholic earls, 232 ; his policy in dealing with the rival factions, 232 ; his labour to preserve peace, 232 ; he rebukes Maitland of Thirlstane for his annoyance, 233 ; difference with his queen as to the custody of the young prince, 233 ; he is reconciled to her, 234 ; he refuses to visit the death-bed of Maitland, 238 ; is secretly glad at his death, 238 ; changes his treasurers, 239 ; receives an embassy from Elizabeth, 239 ; his mode of government, 241 ; the object of his policy to secure the English crown, 241 ; breaks off a hunting party to attend the General Assembly, 242 ; his speech to that body, 242 ; his obsequiousness to Elizabeth, 245 ; he resolves on the restoration of the Catholic earls, 246 ; quarrels with the Kirk on this question, 246 ; is incensed against the citizens of Edinburgh, 252, 253 ; leaves Edinburgh, 253 ; publishes a proclamation declaring it to be not a safe place of residence for him, 254 ; threatens the citizens with vengeance, 254 ; he is attacked by the Kirk, 254, 255 ; he orders the magistrates to imprison the ministers, 255 ; summons to his aid his Highland nobles, 255 ; he returns to Edinburgh, 256 ; resolves on the restoration of Episcopacy, 256-259 ; reconciles the Catholic lords to the Kirk, 259 ; holds a parliament, and animadverts on the conduct of Elizabeth, 261 ; carries out his views with regard to the Kirk, 261, 262 ; restores order throughout the kingdom, 264 ; his anxiety with regard to the English succession, 264-266 ; his punishment of witchcraft, 266 ; turns his attention to the condition of the Isles, 267 ; he attempts to bully the courts of justice, 269, 270 ; apparent partiality for the Catholics, 270, 271 ; his poverty, 271 ; reception of his "Treatise on Government," 272 ; his indignation at the seizure of Ashfield, 273 ; his intrigues with the Catholics, 274 ; encourages the stage, 274 ; adopts measures regarding the succession, 275 ; calls a parliament to replenish his finances, 275 ; he fixes when the year should commence, 276 ; his concession to the young Earl Gowrie, 277 ; increased difference with Elizabeth, 279 ; his intercourse with Gowrie, 280, 281 ; summons a convention to levy taxes, 282 ; his rage against the burghers, 283 ; Gowrie plots against him, 284 ; his interview with the Master of Ruthven, 291 ; decoyed into Gowrie house, 292 ; attacked by the Master of Ruthven, 294 ; his struggle, 295 ; returns thanks to God for his escape, 296 ; is enthusiastically welcomed in Edinburgh, 297 ; accused by the Kirk of treachery to Gowrie, 297 ; his severity to the family of Gowrie, 298 ; suspects Elizabeth of a participation in their plot, 298 ; his intrigues with regard to the succession, 299, 300 ; difference with his queen, 300 ; amicable communications with Elizabeth, 300 ; his connexion with Essex's enterprise, 301 ; sends ambassadors to England, 201, 302 ; his instructions to them, 303, 304 ; intrigues with Sir R. Cecil, 304 ; friendly communications from Elizabeth, 305 ; sycophancy of Cecil and Lord Howard to, 306, 307 ; intrigues with the Catholics, 308 ; heals the differences amongst his nobility, 310 ; conciliates Elizabeth, 311 ; her last letter to, 311 ; proclaimed king of England, 314 ; informed of the death of Elizabeth, 314 ; his parting address to the people of Scotland, 315 ; his arrival in England, 315 ; ominous incident on his leaving Scotland, 316 ; letters between Elizabeth and, 340.

James, son of James IV., birth and death of, ii. 277.

James, Prince, son of James V., ii. 370.

James, The, a Scottish war-ship, ii. 286.

Jamieson's Bruce, i. 103 *n.*

Jane, daughter of James I., ii. 95, 140.

Jardine, Sir Henry, i. 160 *n.*

Jardine, Sir Humphrey, i. 169.

Jardines, a Border clan, ii. 275.

Jaye, Sir Brian de, master of the Scottish Templars, slain at the battle of Falkirk, i. 64, 358 *n.*

Jedburgh, castle of, surrendered to Edward I., i. 48.

Jedburgh, monastery of, burnt, ii. 324.

Jedburgh, forest of, i. 8.

Jedburgh, Abbot of, i. 7 ; sent on a mission to Edward I. of England, 25.

Jedburgh, marriage ceremonies of Alexander III. at, i. 22.

Jerdan, confidential servant of Morton, iv. 35.

Jerusalem, Edward I. commands his heart to be carried to, i. 101.

Jessé, Monsieur, a French literary adventurer, iv. 266.

Jews, i. 277.

Jewels, the royal, ii. 390 *n.*

Jesuits, measures taken by the General Assembly against the, iv. 22.

Joanna, queen of Naples, iv. 313.

Joanna, queen of Alexander II., i. 257.

Joanna, princess of England, proposed marriage of, with David, son of Bruce, i. 154-156, 163, 210.

Joanna, queen of David II., 154-156, 163.

Johanna, wife of John Baliol, i. 83 *n.*

Johanna, sister of Henry III. of England, i. 8 *n.*

Johanna, daughter of the Earl of Pembroke, i. 83 *n.*

John of Acre, espouses the cause of the Comyns, i. 7.

John, King, an island chief, propitiates Haco, King of Norway, i. 12.

John de St John, crowns Baliol at Scone, i. 38.

John, surnamed Staines, i. 254.

John, son of Ade, i. 255.

John, a carpenter, i. 282.

John, a physician, i. 282.

John, king of France, i. 315.
John de Isla, ii. 191.
John of the Isles, stripped of his power, ii. 259, 259 *n.*
John Blackbeird, ii. 215.
John XXII., Pope, issues a bull commanding peace, i. 130.
John, surnamed the Good and Wise, on the qualifications of a good wife, ii. 134.
John, earl of Mar, son of James II., ii. 187, 212, 213, 216.
John, third son of James, earl of Mar, ii. 177.
John, king of England, i. 267.
Johnson, an engineer, iii. 355.
Johnston, Laird of, ii. 143.
Johnston, Laird of, iii. 53, 358, iv. 103.
Johnston, Baron, ii. 348.
Johnston, raid of the Laird of, iv. 195, 214.
Johnstons, the, iii. 228.
Joleta, daughter of the Count de Dreux, married to Alexander III., i. 22.
Jore, Sir John, i. 95 *n.*
Juliers, Earl of, a foreign mercenary, i. 178.
Julius II., Pope, ii. 277, 280, 283, 285.
Jury, trial by, i. 252.
Justiciar, office of, i. 248.
Justice-ayres, employed to plunder the people, iv. 3.

K

Kantire, Mull of, assailed by the Norwegians, i. 12, 128.
Kay, Clan, ii. 4.
Kearnach, i. 10.
Keillor, a black friar, ii. 362.
Keir, Mr Henry, iii. 44.
Keir, Stirling of, ii. 339.
Keath, Agnes, wife of Earl of Argyle, iv. 11, 24.
Keith, Baron, ii. 4.
Keith, Robert, i. 19.
Keith, Sir Robert, i. 120.
Keith, the Marshal, slain at Durham, i. 192.
Keith, the Marshal, i. 218.
Keith's History, i. 129, 132, 133.
Keith, Sir William, at the assault of Berwick, i. 134; his imprudent counsel, 171; killed at the siege of Stirling, 186.
Keith, Sir William, iv. 108, 147, 148, 218.
Kelso, i. 59, 220, 329.
Kelso abbey, i. 237, 240 *n.*
Kelso, Abbot of, i. 239.
Kelso, the monks of, i. 237, 239.
Kelso, monastery of, ii. 188.
Kennedar, promontory of, ii. 365, 365 *n.*
Kennedy, Lord, incurs the displeasure of James I., ii, 80, 195, 196, 230.
Kennedy, Bishop of St Andrews, opposes the designs of the Earl of Douglas, ii. 138, 139, 139 *n.*, 142, 161, 163, 189, 190, 191, 194, 195; his death, 196; his character, 196.
Kennedy, a Protestant martyr, ii. 263.
Kennedy, Lady Janet, ii. 270 *n.*
Kennedy, Jane, iv. 154-157, 165.
Kenninghall, iii. 313.
Kent, Earl of, iv. 137, 152-158.
Ker, Adam, ii. 83.
Ker of Cessford, Andrew, ii. 196.
Ker, Andrew, ii. 283.
Ker of Ancrum, iv. 159.
Ker, Thomas, ii. 26.
Ker, Dand, a Border chief, ii 324.
Ker, Henry, confidential servant of Esmé Stewart, iii. 22.
Ker's History, i. 92.
Ker of Ferniehirst, ii. 309, 309 *n.*, 348.
Ker, Sir Robert, murder of, ii. 283.
Ker, Thomas, iii. 167.
Kerr, George, a Roman Catholic, iv. 187, 187 *n.*, 188, 205, 260.
Ketherans, i. 243.
Kerweray, ii. 188.
Kildare, i. 126.
Kildrummie castle, Bruce's queen takes refuge in, i. 93; taken by the English, 94.
Kilkenny, i. 127.
Killanell, forest of, i. 233.
Killigrew, Henry, iii. 346, 346 *n.*, 347-352, 354-357 *n.*, 358-362, iv. 1, 2, 4-8, 52.
Kilmarnock, castle of, ii. 204.
Kilmarnock caps, i. 317.
Kilmarnock, lordship of, ii. 204.
Kilmaurs, Master of, ii. 307, 330, 332, iii. 20, 24.
Kilwinning, Abbot of, ii. 294.
Kincardine, i. 235.
Kinfauns, Charteris of, iii. 26, 95, 97.
Kinghorn, burnt by the English, iii. 63.
King's bishop, i. 130.
King's college, Aberdeen, ii. 268.
Kinmont Willie. *See* Armstrong.
Kinneil castle, iii. 328, iv. 44, 71, 101, 103, 105.
Kinross churchyard, fort in, i. 177.
Kintail, Mackenzie of, ii. 271.
Kirkaldy of Grange supports the English faction, iii. 20, 22, 45; joins in the murder of Cardinal Beaton, 46, 47, 50; joins with Mary of Guise, 78; goes over to the Protestants, 97-100, 210; writes to the Earl of Bedford, 246-248, 252, 254, 256, 258, 278, 279; made governor of Edinburgh castle, 284, 286, 316, 320, 323, iii. 331, 338, 339, 342-345, 350, 358, 360-362; execution of, and character, 363, 363 *n.*
Kirkaldy, Sir James, iii. 358.
Kirkcudbright, i. 70; Margaret, queen of Henry VI., sails from, ii. 192.
Kirk heugh, iv. 47.
Kirkintilloch, castle of, i. 236.
Kirkliston, i. 61.
Kirk-of-Field, iii. 237.
Kirkpatrick of Kirkmichael, ii. 228.
Kirkpatrick slays John Comyn,—"I'll make sure," i. 87; slays Sir Robert Comyn, 87.
Kirkwold sacked by the Scots, i. 124.
Knapdale, in Argyleshire, ii. 43.
Knockfergus, iii. 35.
Knolles, Sir William, an English envoy, iv. 107, 108.
Knollys, Sir Francis, iii. 289, 290, 293.
Knollys, Sir William, ii. 245.
Knox, John, iii. 42; his parentage, 48; joins the assassins of Cardinal Beaton, 49; retreats to the castle of St Andrews, 51; extraordinary scene, he is called to the ministry, 52; denounces the licentiousness of the soldiers, 54; is made prisoner, and carried into France, 54; regains his liberty, and visits England, 81; has to fly on the acces-

sion of Mary, 81; officiates at Frankfort, 81; becomes acquainted with Calvin, 82; has to seek refuge in his native country, 82; holds a controversy with Maitland of Lethington, 83; accepts a call to Geneva, 83; is burnt in effigy at the high cross, 84; is recalled by the leader of the Protestant movement, 85, 86; he arrives in Scotland, 91; preaches at Perth, effect of his eloquence, 92; preaches at St Andrews, the consequences, 96; his "monstrous regimen of women," 97; his mission to Berwick, 104; writes to Cecil, 109, 109 *n.*; preaches at Edinburgh, 114; leaves the capital, 115; his prayer in St Giles, 126; delivers a course of sermons on the prophecies of Haggai, 128; his description of those who grasped the lands of the Church, 132; his opposition to the mass, 153; he attacks Moray, 154; his interview with Queen Mary, 154, 155, 159, 160; he opposes the meeting of the queens of England and Scotland, 161; is accused to Mary, and brought before her to answer the charge, 168-170; the queen remonstrates with him, 172; is estranged from Moray, 173; his extraordinary appeal to the nobility, 174; his interview with the queen, and his admonition to the queen's household, 175; is opposed to the queen's marriage with Darnley, 196; denies the right of the queen to the exercise of her own religion, 202; his honesty and consistency, 202, 203; his knowledge of the conspiracy against Riccio, 216; he flies to Kyle, 223; he returns to Edinburgh, 260, 261, 267, 268; he supports Morton, 326; refuses to pray for the queen, 339; he is consulted by the English agent, 349; his death and character, 355; his prophetic warnings, 356; letters and papers of, 389 *n.*

Knox, Nathanael, a son of the reformer, iii. 356.

Knox, Eleazer, a son of the reformer, iii. 356, 357.

Knox, Martha, a daughter of the reformer, iii. 357.

Knox, Elizabeth, a daughter of the reformer, iii. 357.

Knox, Margaret, a daughter of the reformer, iii. 357.

Knox, Mr Andrew, a Scottish preacher, iv. 187.

Knox, Mr Andrew, iv. 260.

Kyle, men of, join the confederacy against Baliol, i. 176.

Kyle, gentleman of, iii. 42.

L

Lamb, a Protestant martyr, iii. 21.

Lambert, a learned scholar, ii. 342.

Lamberton kirk, Lammermuir, ii, 270.

La Fayette, French ambassador, ii, 310, 314.

Laing the historian, iii. 366 *n.*

Laird's Jock, the, iii. 315.

Laird Bower, iv. 285-287.

Lamberton, William de, bishop of St Andrews, enters into a secret league with Bruce, i. 88; made prisoner by the English, i. 94.

Lammerkin wood, i. 166.

Lamp of the Lothians, church in Haddington abbey, i. 200.

Lancaster, Earl of, executed for treason, i. 143.

Land, price of, in the thirteenth century, i. 21.

Lanercost, the monastery of, burned by the Scottish army, i. 44.

Lang-Niddry, village of, iii. 57.

Lang-Niddry, Douglas of, iii. 40, iv. 31.

Lang-Niddry, Laird of, iv. 175.

Langside, battle of, iii. 287-289.

Largs, battle of, i. 15.

Largs, iii. 293.

Lauder of the Bass, ii. 303.

Lauder, bishop of Lismore, ii. 166.

Lauder, Sir Robert, ii. 57, 59.

Lauder, Sir Robert, ii. 305.

Lauder, William, bishop of Glasgow, ii. 57.

Lauder of Hatton, William, ii. 156.

Lauder, a priest, ii. 263.

Lauder, archdeacon of Lothian, ii. 35.

Lauder, Alan, ii. 129.

Lauriston, Laird of, a reformer, ii. 355.

Lawers, Campbell of, ii. 294.

Lawson, Mr James, iii. 355, 356, iv. 17, 37, 42, 43, 45-47, 50, 53.

Laws passed by the Scottish Parliament of 1318, i. 135.

Laws, codification of, ii. 209.

Layton, Sir Brian, iii. 28-30.

Learmont, Sir James, ii. 372, 373.

Learmont, Sir John, treasurer, iii. 9, 13.

Leases in the reign of James II., ii. 148.

Leipsic, university of, ii. 355.

Leighton, bishop of Aberdeen, ii. 128.

Leighton, Dr, iii. 286.

Leilinghen, truce of, ii. 3.

Leith, James III. conveyed from, ii. 123; plundered by the Earl of Hertford, iii. 23; burnt by the Duke of Somerset, 63; French troops land at, 67, 381 *n.*

Leith, John de, ii. 43, 48.

Lalain, knights of, ii. 145.

Lalain, Roderic, ii. 262.

Lennox, Earl of, takes the oath of fealty to Edward I. of England, i. 34; his skirmish with the English at Stirling bridge, 53; attempts to negotiate with Wallace, 53; joins Wallace, 54; present at the election of Wallace to the governorship, 58; joins Bruce, 88; his meeting with Bruce, 93.

Lennox, Earl of, slain at Halidon, i. 173.

Lennox, John Stewart, of Darnley, earl of, ii. 49; is imprisoned, 58; condemned and executed, 59, 60.

Lennox, Earl of, slain at the battle of Flodden, ii. 293.

Lennox, Earl of, ii. 303, 308, 329, 330, 332; joins with Angus, 337; deserts Angus, and endeavours to rescue the king, 338; his death, 339.

Lennox, Earl of, iii. 7; returns to Scotland, 11; allies himself with Cardinal Beaton, 12; obtains possession of the infant queen, 15; joins the English faction, 17; is promised by Henry VIII. the governorship of Scotland, 24; flies to England, 25; sails for Scotland, but has to return, 26; abortive attempt to land in Scotland, 39; joins in the invasion of Scotland, 65; is committed to

the Tower, 163; is permitted to return to Scotland, 177-180, 185, 192, 205; conspires against the life of Riccio, 215, 217; charges certain persons with the murder of his son, Lord Darnley, 239, 241, 242, 286, 300; elected regent, 332; his death, 341, 342.
Lennox, Esmé Stewart, duke of, his arrival from France, iv. 22; finds favour with the king, 22; is created Earl of Lennox, and chamberlain for Scotland, 23, 24; rises higher still in the estimation of the king, 25; a plot against him, 25; repels the charge of treasonable intentions, 26; he professes himself a Protestant, 26-28; he becomes daily more formidable in power, 29; he enters into communication with Queen Mary, 30; advises the destruction of Morton, 30; his triumph over the ex-regent, 31; prepares to resist the English invasion, 33; discovers the plot against him, 35; the death of Morton concentrates the whole power into his hands, 38; professes a desire to maintain amicable relations with England, 38; is made a duke, 39; appoints Montgomery to the bishopric of Glasgow, 41; determines to put down Presbyterianism, 41, 43, 44, 46; resolves on the seizure of the Protestant leaders, 48, 49; takes refuge in the capital when informed of the seizure of the king, 50; his timidity, makes overtures to the Ruthven party, 51; they are rejected, and he is commanded by them to leave the kingdom, 51; he prepares to obey, 52; publishes a denial of the accusations made against him, 53; leaves Scotland, 56; has an interview with Queen Elizabeth, 56; his death, 65.
Lennox, Duke of, arrives in Scotland, iv. 71, 71 *n.*, 169; is made president of the Privy Council, 171, 184; joins in seizing the person of James VI., 197; unites with the king's party, 205; is appointed lieutenant in the north, 225; reconciliation with the Earl of Mar, 310.
Lennox, Countess of, iii. 188, 199, 202.
Lent, Protestants persecuted for eating meat during, iv. 3.
Leo X., Pope, ii. 285.
Lesley, Sir Norman, engaged in a secret mission, i. 210.
Lesley, Walter, i. 206.
Lesley of Balquhain and his six sons slain at Harlaw, ii. 41.
Lesley of Auchtermuchty, iii. 140.
Lesley, Sir George, at the battle of Homildon, ii. 25.
Lesley, William, an attendant on James VI., iv. 201.
Lesley, John, enemy of Cardinal Beaton, iii. 45-47, 50, 51.
Lesley, bishop of Ross, iii. 140, 144, 145, 260, 294-296, 298, 302-304, 310.
Leslie, Robert, ii. 366.
Lethington, Lady, iv. 40.
Letter, memorable, from the Scottish Parliament to the Pope, i. 140.
Le Verac, French ambassador, ii. 327.
Lewis XI. of France, ii. 140, 205, 207, 215.
Lewis XII. of France, ii. 268, 276, 278, 280, 283, 285, 298, 299.
Lichfield, iv. 123, 129.
Liddal, Sir James, ii. 225.
Liddel, castle of, i. 190.
Liddell, rector of Forres, ii. 189.
Liddesdale, i. 195.
Liddesdale, Knight of. *See* Douglas.
Lignerolles, Monsieur de, iii. 273, 274, 277.
Lilburn, Sir John, taken prisoner, i. 332.
Lilburn, an Englishman, ii. 283.
Lincoln, English Parliament meets at, i. 70.
Lincoln, Earl of, iv. 137.
Lindesay, David de, i. 3.
Lindores, monastery of, ii. 228.
Lindores, Lawrence of, ii. 37, 43, 81, 82.
Lindsay, David, earl of Crawford, ii. 210.
Lindsay, Alexander, surnamed "Tiger, or Earl Beardy," ii. 140; succeeds to the earldom of Crawford, 142; encounters the Earl of Huntly near Brechin and is defeated, 158; sues for pardon to the king, 162; his death, 162.
Lindsay of the Byres, Lord, ii. 236, 239, 291.
Lindsay of the Byres, Lord, iii. 154, 256, 318, 320, 323, 326, iv. 9, 12, 13, 15; protests against the meeting of parliament in Stirling castle, 16, 17, 39, 47-49.
Lindsay, Lord, iii. 130, 219, 232, 254, 257, 258, 264, 268, 276, 288, 294.
Lindsay, Sir Alexander, cuts off a ship's crew, i. 335.
Lindsay, Sir David, ii. 4; challenges Lord Wells, 5.
Lindsay, Sir David, ii. 289.
Lindsay of the Mount, Sir David, ii. 350, 366, 367, 369.
Lindsay, Sir Walter, iv. 225.
Lindsay of Rossie, Sir William, ii. 21.
Lindsay of Brechin, John, ii. 158.
Lindsay, Alexander, a hydrographer, ii. 365.
Lindsay, David, master of Crawford, iii. 45.
Lindsay, James, provost of Lincluden, ii. 189.
Lindsay, David, a preacher, iii. 355, 356, iv. 71; is imprisoned in Blackness, 79; is reported to have seen an extraordinary vision, 93, 171, 172, 230, 250, 256.
Linlithgow castle taken by a labourer, i. 111.
Linlithgow, strange visitant to James IV. at, ii. 288, 289.
Linlithgow, Earl of, iv. 315.
Linlithgow, Sheriff of, iii. 288.
Linton, Earl, iii. 57.
Linton Bridge, iv. 160.
Lion, The, a Scottish privateer, iii. 53.
Lisle, Lord, iii. 6, 22, 23.
Little Canglar, ii. 239.
Little, Clement, an advocate, iii. 316.
Livingston, James, ii. 145.
Livingston, David, ii. 145.
Livingston of Carnwath, Alexander, ii. 57.
Livingston, Alexander, hanged, ii. 146.
Livingston, Robert, hanged, ii. 146.
Livingston, Sir Alexander, governor of Stirling castle, ii. 123-126; seizes the queen-mother, 127, 128, 130, 131, 133, 135-138, 142; is arrested, 145.
Livingston, Sir James, succeeds his father as governor of James III., ii. 137; arrested, 145; appointed chamberlain to James III., 189; connives at the plot against the king, 196.
Livingston, Lord, protector of Queen Mary, iii. 64, 68, 331, 332, iv. 57, 81.

Livingstons, faction of the, ii. 142; the leading men arrested, 145.
Lochaber axe, i. 92.
Lochaber, ii. 79, 272.
Loch Don, castle of, i. 95.
Lochendorb, castle of, i. 77, 359 *n.*; W. Bullock starved to death in the castle of, 189.
Lochinvar, Laird of, iii. 332.
Lochmaben, castle of, besieged by John Comyn, earl of Buchan, i. 41, iv. 166.
Lochkilkerran, ii. 272.
Lochleven, iii. 172, 204, 257, 264, 267.
Lochleven, Douglas of, at the Stirling tournament, ii. 145.
Lochlomond castle, seizure of, ii. 63.
Lochwinnoch, Laird of, ii. 340.
Lock, Henry, an agent of Queen Elizabeth, iv. 196, 200, 214.
Logan of Restalrig, Robert, iv. 285-287.
Loggen, Thomas, a spy, ii. 343.
Logie, Sir John, conspires against the life of Bruce, is discovered and put to death, i. 142.
Logy, Margaret, married to David II., i. 213; makes a pilgrimage to Canterbury, 214; visits the shrine of Thomas à Becket, 225; is divorced, 231; sails for France, 231; appeals in person to the Papal court, 231; she dies, 231, 231 *n.*
Lombards propose to establish manufactures in Scotland, i. 23.
London populace prevent the restoration of the stone on which the Kings of Scotland were crowned.
Longueville, Duke of, ii. 360.
Longueville, Meriadet, lord of, ii. 145.
Lord's Supper, celebration of the, ii. 82.
Loretto, Lady of, shrine of, ii. 357.
Lorn, Allan of, ii. 188.
Lorn, Ker of, ii. 188.
Lorn, Lord of, attacks Bruce, i. 92; surrenders his castle of Dunstaffnage to Bruce, and does homage to him, i. 106.
Lorn, John of, employs a bloodhound to track Bruce, i. 99; flies to England, 106; captured by Bruce, 128; is shut up in Lochleven castle, where he dies, 128.
Lorraine, Cardinal of, iii. 71, 133, 135, 152, 159, 188, 213.
Lorraine, assassination of the Cardinal of, iv. 166.
Lothian, inundation in the country of, i. 207.
Lothian, Archdeacon of, at the English court, i. 208.
Lothian, a priest, ii. 350.
Loudon Hill, Bruce defeats the English at, i. 100.
Louth, i. 126.
Lovat, Lord, ii. 272.
Lovat, Lord, iii. 25.
Lovat, Laird of, iv. 184.
"Love-days," iii. 148.
Lovel, James, slain at Harlaw, ii. 41.
Lowther, deputy-governor of Carlisle, iii. 288.
Luband, Sir Piers, governor of Edinburgh castle, is distrusted by his men, and imprisoned, i. 112; is liberated by Randolph, 112; he joins Bruce, 112.
Lucy, Sir Anthony, captures Sir W. Douglas, i. 169.
Ludford Field, ii. 179.
Lumley, Lord, iv. 137.
Lumsden of Blanearn, iii. 140.
Lundie, Campbell of, ii. 350.
Lundie, Laird of, iv. 42.
Lundin, Sir Richard, goes over to the English, i. 51; his advice at the battle of Stirling, 54.
Lundy, Campbell of, iii. 19.
Luther, ii. 342.
Lutyni, Joseph, iii. 233, 234, 239.
Lyle, Lord, ii. 247, 249, 250.
Lyle, Alan de, put to death by the people of Bute, i. 176.
Lyon, John, a poisoner, ii. 361, 361 *n.*

M

Mabuisson, Sir Edward, one of an embassy to Rome, i. 141.
Macalpin, a Highland deserter, ii. 250.
Macalzean, an imputed sorceress, iv. 201.
Macarthur, John, beheaded by James I., ii. 70.
Macbee, John, surnamed Machabæus, ii. 355, 355 *n.*
Macconnell, James, lord of the Isles, iii. 39.
Macconnel of Isla, James, ii. 366 *n.*
Macdonald of Sleat, Donald Gorm, iv. 235, 241, 267.
Macdonald of Dunyreg, Angus, iv. 235.
Macdonald of Lochalsh, Sir Alexander, ii. 312, 312 *n.*, 313.
Macdowall, a Galloway chieftain in the English interest, i. 98.
Macduff, relative to Duncan, earl of Fife seizes upon the earldom, i. 40; is summoned to answer for his conduct before the Scottish Parliament, 40; is imprisoned, 40; on his release he appeals to Edward I., 40; joins Wallace, 61; is slain at the battle of Falkirk, i. 64.
Macfadyan, Sir Morice, ii. 166.
Machiavel, iv. 285.
Macintosh, Duncan, chief of the clan Chattan, ii. 258.
Macintosh, heir of the chief of Chattan, ii. 271.
Mackintosh, chief of the clan Chattan, iii. 75.
Mackintosh, Laird of, iv. 169, 182.
MacIan, a Highland chief, ii. 275, 287.
Mackane of Ardnamurchan, ii. 258.
Mackay, Angus Dow, ii. 79.
Mackenzie, Laird of, ii. 258.
Mackenzie, John, chief of the clan, ii. 366 *n.*
Mackenzie of Kentail, iv. 269.
Maclachlan, Sir Gilbert, ii. 166.
Maclane of Gigha, Alan, iii. 40.
Maclean, a Highland chief, ii. 42.
Maclean of Dowart, ii. 276, 287, 294, 312, 313.
Maclean of Dowart, Hector, ii. 366 *n.*
Maclean, Lauchlan, ii. 128.
Maclean of Duart, Sir Lauchlan, iv. 222-224, 235, 236, 241, 267, 268.
Maclellan, a tutor, beheaded by the Earl of Douglas, ii. 155.
Macleod of Harris, Roderick, known as "Ruari Mor," iv. 235, 241, 269.
Macleod of Dunvegan, ii. 312.
Macleod, a Highland chief, ii. 275.

Macleod of Dunvegan, Alexander, ii. 366 *n.*
Macleod of the Lewis, Roderick, ii. 366 *n.*
Macleod of the Lewis, Torquil, ii. 276.
Macleod, Tormond, iv. 269.
Macneill of Barra, ii. 276.
Macneill, son of Laird of Barra, iv. 223.
Macquarrie of Ulva, ii. 276.
Macquharry, Thomas, a Jesuit, iv. 212.
Maddé, an anonymous writer in the time of Regent Moray, iii. 283, 284.
Magdalen, wife of James IV., ii. 358, 360.
Magnus, Dr, commissioner of Henry VIII., ii. 305, 329 *n.*, 330-332, 332 *n.*, 333, 333 *n.*, 334, 343 *n.*, 345, 348.
Magnus, prince of Norway, i. 17.
Mair, John, Knox's master, ii. 342.
Maitland of Lethington espouses the cause of Mary of Guise, iii. 78; at a conference in France, 81; holds a controversy with Knox, 83; joins the reformers, 111; is despatched on a mission to Elizabeth, 115, 118, 120, 122; his speech before Parliament, 127; his letter to Cecil, 127, 130, 133; perceives the change of policy which must follow the demise of the queen's husband, 138; his description of Scottish parties, 141; on the power of gold, 148; his opinion of the queen and his mission to England, 155, 156; endeavours to secure for Mary the succession to the English crown, 156; despatched to England to arrange an interview between the queens, 161; brings intelligence that the Queen of England consents to meet with Queen Mary, 164; is again sent to England by the queen, 170; returns, 175; his reply to the English envoy to Elizabeth's proposal that the queen should marry Leicester, 177; writes to Cecil, 178; intercedes for the Earl of Lennox, 178; his letter to Cecil on that subject, 179, 180; his cautious proceedings with Randolph, 183; writes Cecil, 186, 189, 190; is sent to London regarding the queen's intended marriage with Darnley, 193; returns to Scotland, his business, 197, 205, 209; suspected by Queen Mary, 213; declared a traitor, 223; on the escape of Mary he flies to Athole, 223; his indignation against Darnley, 224; is pardoned, 225; detects the partiality of Mary for Bothwell, 228; conspires to murder Darnley, 231, 231 *n.*, 235, 237; his falsehood to the English envoy, 243-245; joins a coalition for the murder of Bothwell, 252-254; implicated in the murder of Darnley, 259; his interview with Throckmorton, 264; sends a message to Mary, 266; his conversation with Throckmorton on putting the queen to death, 271, 276, 277, 282-284; remonstrates with Moray, 294; his despatches to Mary, 295; has a secret interview with the Duke of Norfolk, 296; has an interview with Queen Elizabeth, 299; is present in Westminster, 300; his remark on the queen's divorce, 312; his arraignment and arrest, 313, 314; is freed by Kirkaldy of Grange, and takes refuge in Edinburgh castle, 314, 325; writes Cecil, 329; his correspondence with the Earl of Sussex, 329-332, 338; is overreached by the duplicity of Elizabeth; 344-346; his determination not to surrender, 359, 360; is exempt from clemency, 361; is surrendered to Morton, and dies in prison, 362.
Maitland, younger of Lethington, ii. 132.
Maitland of Lethington, Sir Richard, iv. 174.
Maitland of Thirlstane, Sir John, iv. 44; the league with England distasteful to, 109; is created chancellor, 163; his appeal to the Scottish Parliament on the death of Mary, 164; his letter on the death of the Duke of Guise, 168; accompanies King James to Denmark, 171; his efforts to destroy the power of the nobility, 174; his complicity with the murder of the Earl of Moray, 184; antipathy against him of the Scottish queen, 192; returns to court, 194; accompanies James in his expedition against Earl of Huntly, &c., 225; remonstrates with the king in favour of, 225; his ambition to govern, 232, 233; his death, 238.
Maitland, John, iii. 362, 363.
Maitland, Thomas, iii. 339.
Maitland's Narrative, iii. 215 *n.*
Maitland, nephew of the Earl of March, ii. 12.
Major, the historian, i. 6, 100.
Makgill, clerk register, iii. 216, 227, 274, 294, 298, 304, 312, 323, 338, iv. 13, 44.
Makgill, David, a Lord of Session, iv. 177, 196.
Makke, Alexander, a poisoner, ii. 361, 361 *n.*
Makmathan, ii. 70.
Makreiny, Alexander, ii. 70.
Malcolm III., i. 242.
Malcolmson, of the clan Chattan, ii. 341.
Malherbe, Sir Gilbert de, conspires against the life of Bruce, is discovered and put to death, i. 142.
Malmesbury, the monk, on the battle of Bannockburn, i. 124.
Malton, i. 144.
Man, isle of, naval expedition against the, i. 113; the island completely subdued, 113; annual income of the island, 216.
Mandeville, Roger de, i. 34, 37.
Mangerton, Laird of, iii. 228.
Mangertown, Laird of, iii. 57.
Mansell, Sir Rise, iii. 26.
Manny, Sir Walter, at the siege of Berwick, i. 198.
Manton, Ralph de, i. 75.
Manufactures in the early ages, i. 265.
Mar, William, earl of, accuses Durward of a design against the crown, i. 4; chosen guardian of Alexander III., 5; removed from the government, 6.
Mar, Earl of, in 1290, joins Bruce, lord of Annandale, i. 30; appeals to Edward I. of England, 31 *n.*; takes the oath of homage to Edward, 34.
Mar, Earl of, in 1297, i. 56.
Mar, Donald, tenth earl of, i. 160.
Mar, Donald, earl of, appointed regent, i. 164; opposes Edward Baliol at Dupplin Moor, 165; his camp is surprised, he is killed, and his army routed with great slaughter, 166.
Mar, Earl of, takes service under Edward III., i. 206.
Mar, Alexander Stewart, earl of, his marriage with the Countess of Mar, ii. 29; turns pirate, 36; commands at the battle of Harlaw, 40-42; his death, 136.

Mar, John, carl of, son of James III., ii. 244.
Mar, Earl of, iii. 242, 247, 254, 269.
Mar, Earl of, iv. 9; instigated by Morton, he seizes Stirling castle, 14; refuses admittance to the king's council, 15, 15 *n.*; agrees with his uncle, and retains Stirling castle and the custody of the king's person, 15; receives secret intelligence of a plot to seize the king, and to bring Morton to the scaffold, 25, 27; joins the plot against Lennox, 35, 39, 47; joins in the Gowrie conspiracy, 48, 49, 66; is banished, 68, 70, 72; conspires again, and saves himself by flight, 44; declared a traitor, 78; conspires against Arran, 103, 105, 227, 229, 232, 253, 310.
Mar, Isabella, countess of, incident regarding, ii. 29.
Mar, Countess of, iii. 354, iv. 4.
March, Earl of, incites the people against the Bissets, i. 2.
March, or Dunbar, Patrick, earl of, i. 6 *n.*
March, or Dunbar, Patrick, earl of, competitor for the crown, i. 34; acknowledges Edward I. as Lord Paramount, 34; withdraws his claim to the crown, 37; renews his homage, 42; entertains Edward II. on his flight from Bannockburn, 122.
March, Earl of, his suspicious neutrality at the battle of Dupplin Moor, i. 165, 166; goes over to the English, 167; is intrusted with the defence of Berwick castle, 170; swears fealty to Edward III., 173; rejoins the Scots, 182; at the battle of Durham, 192; conducts negotiations for the release of David II., 197; aids in surprising the town of Berwick, 198; secret missions, 205; opposes the designs of David II., 212; submits to the royal clemency, 213; visits the shrine of Thomas à Becket, 218; rewarded by Robert II., 327; slaughters the English at Roxburgh, 332.
March, Earl of, proposes his daughter as wife to Duke of Rothesay, ii. 11; his proposal evaded, he repairs to the English court, 12; invades Scotland, 13; at the battle of Homildon, 24; at the battle of Hartfield, 28; returns to Scotland, 37.
March, George, earl of, deprived of his estates, ii. 84.
March, Earl of, receives the earldom of Orkney, iv. 39, 49.
March, Countess of, iv. 39.
Margaret, marriage of, daughter of Henry III. of England to Alexander III., i. 4; she sets out for Scotland, 4; complaints of her treatment, 5; she visits her father in London, 7; is forcibly carried off to Stirling by the Comyns, 7; again visits London, 9; is delivered of a daughter at Windsor, 9; is delivered of a son, 18; is present at the coronation of her brother, Edward I., 20; her death, 21.
Margaret, daughter of Alexander III., born at Windsor, i. 9; married to the King of Norway, 21; her death, 22.
Margaret, daughter of Earl of Flanders, married to Alexander, prince of Scotland, i. 22.
Margaret, the Maiden of Norway, i. 24; her death, 30.
Margaret, daughter of David, Earl of Huntingdon, i. 35.
Margaret, daughter of James I., her birth, ii. 63; projected marriage of, 63; her death, 140.
Margaret, daughter of James II., ii. 187, 215, 216.
Margaret, queen of Henry VI., ii. 190-194.
Margaret, daughter of King of Norway, ii. 190.
Margaret Lesley, wife of Donald of the Isles, ii. 39.
Margaret, princess of Denmark, i. 200; negotiations of marriage with James III., ii. 201; lands at Leith, 202; is married, 202; gives birth to James IV., 209; her death, 231, 231 *n.*
Margaret, princess, daughter of Henry VII., negotiations for her marriage with James IV., ii. 268, 269, 269 *n.*; she arrives at Edinburgh, 271; is married at Holyrood, 271; gives birth to a son, who dies prematurely, 277, 277 *n.*; gives birth to another son, afterwards James V., 284; beseeches her husband not to go to war with England, 288; marries Earl of Angus, 298; refuses to surrender her children, 302; is made regent, 296; her character, 297; she is delivered of a son, Duke of Ross, 298; takes up her residence in Edinburgh castle, 303; makes her escape, 304; flies to England, 305; is deserted by her husband, 306; returns to Scotland, 310; her intrigues, 311-328; her arrangements with Earl of Angus, 334; divorced from him, she marries Henry Stewart, 336; falls into contempt, 337; her death, 369.
Margaret, the, a Scottish war-ship, ii. 286.
Marignano, battle of, ii. 306.
Marjory, countess of Carrick, carries off Robert de Bruce, father of King Robert the Bruce, and marries him, i. 19, 19 *n.*
Marjory, daughter of Alexander II., i. 34.
Marjory, daughter of Henry, prince of Scotland, i. 34.
Marjory, daughter of William the Lion, i. 34.
Marjory, marriage of, daughter of Bruce, i. 126.
Marmaduke, Sir John, his mission to Edward I. of England, i. 61.
Marpurg, university of, ii. 342.
Marriage, proposed, of the niece of Philip of France with Baliol's eldest son, i. 43.
Marshal, Earl, of England, challenge of, to the Scots, i, 350.
Marshal, the Earl, revolt of, in 1488, ii. 237, 300, 303.
Marshal, the Earl, iii. 9; joins the plot against Cardinal Beaton, 31; approves of the Reformation, 41.
Marshal, Earl, iii. 325, iv. 49, 60.
Marshall, Master of, iii. 318.
Martignes, a French officer, iii. 119, 136.
Martin, a play-actor, iv. 274.
Martyrdom of a woman at Perth, iii. 21.
Mary de Couci, queen of Alexander II., i. 1; present at the marriage of her son with Margaret of England, 4; supports the cause of the Comyns, 7.
Mary, Bruce's sister, made prisoner, i. 94.
Mary, daughter of James I., ii. 96.
Mary, daughter of James II., ii. 187.
Mary of Gueldres, ii. 142; arrives in Scotland,

144; is married, 145; her intrepid conduct on the death of her husband, James II., 185; appointed regent, 189; her death, 194.
Mary, Princess, sister of James III., married to Sir Thomas Boyd, ii. 199; is divorced from her husband and married to Lord Hamilton, 204.
Mary, Queen of England, proposed marriage of, to James V., ii. 333.
Mary, princess of Portugal, ii. 354.
Mary, Queen of Scots, her birth, ii. 375, 375 *n.*; proposed marriage to the Prince of Wales, iii. 1, 13; conveyed to Stirling, 15; sent to France, 68, 382 *n.*; appoints her mother regent, 73; is married to the dauphin, 78; his death, 136; letter of, to parliament, 138; sends four envoys to parliament, 140; her reception at Fontainebleau of the English ambassador, 140, 141; her confiding interview with Moray, 144, 145; her unwillingness to leave France, 146; changes her mind, and resolves to go to Scotland, 149; she solicits a passport from Elizabeth, 149; she is deeply wounded at the refusal, 151; her reply to Throckmorton, 152; she leaves France, escapes the English cruisers, and arrives at Leith, 152, 153; her reception by her subjects, 153; the celebration of the mass in her private chapel creates a tumult, 153; signifies her determination to respect the national faith, 154; has an interview with Knox, 154, 155; having in view her title to the throne of England, she determines to conciliate Elizabeth, 156; this the key to her policy during the first span of her government, 157; sincerity of her attachment for England, 162, 163; she creates Moray Earl of Mar, 163; she is sought in marriage by the King of Sweden, 163; her anxiety to have a personal interview with Elizabeth, 164; receives a messenger from the Pope, 165; sets out on a progress northward, 165; her exasperation at the conduct of Sir John Gordon, 166; the Earl of Huntly rebels, and she is refused admittance into Inverness Castle, 166; the castle is surrendered, and Huntly defeated and slain, 166, 167; she returns to the capital, 167; holds revels which are denounced by Knox, 168; she summons Knox to appear before her, 168; her interview with him, 169, 170; infatuation of Chartellet, a French gentleman, and her levity, 170; offers to mediate between France and England, 171; her mind is occupied with the right of her succession to the English throne, and her marriage, 171; the aversion felt against her religion, 172; the persecution of the Catholics induces her to send for Knox, 172; she argues with him on the cruelty of religious persecution, 172, 173; opens parliament, 173; she summons Knox again before her, 174, 175; she is informed of the wish of Elizabeth with respect to her marriage, 177; her answer, 177; she grants permission to the Earl of Lennox to return to Scotland, 177; receives him at Holyrood, 180; she despatches Sir James Melvill on a mission to the English court, 181; restores to Lennox his honours and estates, 185; a marriage with the Earl of Leicester again urged upon her by the English envoy, 186-188; she welcomes Darnley at Wemyss castle, 188; treats with coldness the proposal of a marriage with the King of France, 188; resolves on a marriage with Darnley, 191; attends him while he is dangerously ill, 192; sends an agent to England to gain the approval of Elizabeth to the marriage, 193; she summons Bothwell to stand his trial for treason, 193; she labours to gain the sanction of Moray to her marriage, 196, 197; she despatches a messenger to her secretary, Lethington, 197; a convention of the nobility having agreed to her marriage, she creates Darnley Lord of Ardmanach and Earl of Ross, 198; her answer to the supplication of the General Assembly, 203, 204; she defeats a design to seize her person, 204; promptitude of her measures against the rebellious nobles, 205; her efforts to reclaim Moray from the leadership of the revolt, 205; she fails in doing so, 205; her answer to Elizabeth's intercession for Moray, 206; she marries Darnley, 207; she commands Moray to appear at court under penalty of being proclaimed a traitor, 207; she takes the field against her enemies, 208; her sincere desire for peace, 208; her stipulations, 208, 209; she compels the insurgents to retreat from Edinburgh, 209; she crushes the rebellion in Fifeshire, 210; charges made against her, 210, 211; marches against the rebels in Dumfries, 211; writes to Elizabeth on giving protection to her rebellious subjects, 212; she begins to consult Riccio in affairs of state, 213; she signs the league against Protestantism, 214; the murder of Riccio is perpetrated in her bed-chamber, 220; is kept a prisoner in her apartment, 221; she escapes, 222; her measures against the murderers, 223; she composes the differences which exist amongst the nobility, 223; her leniency terrifies Darnley, 223; his fellow-conspirators submit proof to the queen that he was the instigator of Riccio's murder, 223; her feelings on the discovery, 224; her confinement, 224; her measures to promote concord amongst the principal men in the state, 225; she remonstrates with Darnley, 225; begins to treat Bothwell with marked favour, 228; while lying dangerously wounded, she visits him, 228; she is seized with a dangerous fever, 229; a proposal of divorce submitted to her, 230; she is present at the baptism of her son, 231; sends Lutyni on a mission to France, 233; orders his arrest, 234; she visits Darnley at Glasgow, 235; she agrees to live with him again, 236; she carries him to Edinburgh, 236; she lodges him in the Dominican monastery, 236; she visits him, and after remaining some hours retires, 237; she is informed of the murder of Darnley, 238; she removes from Holyrood to Seton House, 239; her conduct two weeks after the murder, 241; her infatuation for Bothwell, 242, 243; attends parliament, measures passed favourable to the Protestant party, 245; she is carried off by Bothwell, 247; returns under his protection to the capital, 248; she addresses the

high court, 250; she creates Bothwell Duke of Orkney, &c., 251; marries him, 251; her treatment by Bothwell, 252; sends envoys to England and France on the business of her marriage, 253; a summons to her nobles is disregarded, 254; she retires to Borthwick castle, 254; an attempt made to capture her and Bothwell fails, 254; she escapes to Dunbar, 254; collects a force and entrenches herself on Carberry Hill, 255; negotiates with the confederate lords, 255; her troops desert and she surrenders. 256; her treatment by Lindsay, 257; is conveyed to Lochleven castle, 257; the rigour of her confinement, 261; proposals made to her, 262-267; she is terrified into signing her abdication, &c., 268; she is visited by Moray, 275, 276; she makes her escape from Lochleven, 285; she prevails on her followers to march to Dumbarton, 287; they are attacked at Langside, routed, and she flies to the confines of England, 288; arrives at Carlisle, 288; she offers to vindicate her conduct in person before Elizabeth, 289; she is detained a prisoner, 291; protests against her subjects being permitted to plead against her, 291; her interview with Lord Herries, 293; she accepts the conditions submitted by Elizabeth, 293; her interview with the Bishop of Ross, 294; proceedings in York and London, to implicate her in the murder of Darnley, 294-306; her projected marriage with the Duke of Norfolk, 309-313; she rejects the conditions on which Elizabeth offers her liberty, 333; she is interrogated as to her connexion with the Duke of Norfolk's intrigues, 346; Elizabeth's efforts to have her executed, 347-353; a letter of hers intercepted, iv. 19; her failing health, 39; beseeches Elizabeth for some slight amelioration of her imprisonment, but is refused, 40; presents a memorial to Elizabeth and the English Parliament, 40; its reception compels her to embrace more determined measures, 40; "the association" is originated, 40; she writes again to Elizabeth, 62; she writes to the Master of Gray, 93; her connexion with Babington's conspiracy discovered, 101; addresses a letter to Charles Paget on the most likely method of invading England, 117; the letter is intercepted, 117; she is warned to hold no communication with Ballard, 118; renews her correspondence with Babington, 119-129; she is invited to hunt by her keeper, when she is arrested on the charge of conspiracy, 131; her depositories violated, and her money and letters seized, 131; affecting incident at Chartley, 133; she is informed that she is to be put upon her trial, 135; she determines not to plead, 136; after much suspense she agrees to appear before the commissioners, 137; her trial and defence, 137-140; the commissioners find her guilty, 143; she is informed of their decision, 144; insulted by her keeper, 144; hears her death-warrant read to her, 153; is refused the services of her priest, 154; her last moments and execution, 154-158.

Marys, the four, Fleming, Beaton, Seton, Livingston, iii. 68, 181.

Mary, Princess, daughter of Henry VIII., ii. 333, 335.

Mathews, Dr Toby, iv. 198, 203, 228.

Mathias, Emperor, iv. 279.

Mathison, Alexander, ii. 266, 284.

Maud, an informer, iv. 114, 115, 129.

Maudelain, a priest, ii. 104.

Maule, Sir Thomas, brave defence of Brechin castle. i. 77.

Maule, Sir Robert, slain at Harlaw, ii. 41.

Mauley, Sir Edmund, slain at Bannockburn, i. 121.

Maupas, Sir John, slays Edward Bruce, i. 127.

Maurice, abbot of Inchaffray, i. 118.

Maurice of Moray, i. 186.

Mauvissiere, Monsieur de, iii. 211, iv. 40, 56, 57, 61.

Mawmor, ii. 272.

Maximilian, the emperor, ii. 276, 277.

Maxwell, Sir Eustace de, conspires against Bruce, i. 142.

Maxwell, Sir John, ii. 85.

Maxwell, Lord, ii. 231, 318, 337, 338, 346, 348, 351, 357.

Maxwell, Lord, taken prisoner at Solway Moss, ii. 374; regains his liberty, iii. 5; becomes a convert to the reformed doctrines, 9-14; intrigues with England, 19; is taken prisoner by Arran, 39, 211, 338, iv. 1; created Earl of Morton, 39, 49, 52, 55, 60, 98; joins the conspiracy against Arran, 103-105; celebrates mass in Lincluden church, 108; is imprisoned by the king, 108, 159, 165.

Maxwell, Master of, iii. 63.

Maxwell, David, iv. 166.

Maxwell of Calderwood, James, iv. 208.

May, the Isle of, i. 242.

Medici, Catherine de, ii. 356, iii. 213, 363, iv. 7.

Mediterranean, navigation of the, ii. 65.

Melancthon, ii. 342.

Meldrum, Andrew, ii. 123, 134.

Meldrum, Seton of, ii. 360.

Melrose abbey burnt, i. 341, iii. 29.

Melville, James, joins in the murder of Cardinal Beaton, iii. 46, 47.

Melvill, Sir James, iii. 103, 181-183, 189, 191, 214, 224, 225, 228, 247, 248, 251, 252, 264, 268, 274, 306, 326, 347, iv. 46, 71, 79, 80, 96, 170, 261, 262.

Melvill, Sir Robert, iii. 116, 209, 210, 252, 253, 259, 262-265, 267, 268, 285, 288, 295, 298, 360, 361, iv. 44, 71, 75, 76, 90, 148, 149, 160, 190, 195, 239.

Melvill, Andrew, iii. 288.

Melvil, Andrew, the reformer, iv. 10; elected moderator of the General Assembly of 1578, 14, 43; preaches a remarkable sermon, 45-47, 53, 71; flies to England, 75, 79, 105, 224, 225, 261, 262, 272.

Melvil, James, a Scottish preacher, iv. 46, 206, 208.

Melton, William de, archbishop of York, attacks the Scots, i. 138.

Mendicants, laws against, ii. 52.

Menainville, Monsieur de, French ambassador, iv. 58-61, 64, 68.

Mendoza, Spanish ambassador, iv. 114, 115, 119, 127, 129.

Menteith ravaged by the English army, i. 85.

Menteith, Earl of, accompanies Margaret daughter of Alexander III., into Norway, i. 21.
Menteith, Walter Stewart, earl of, joins Bruce, earl of Carrick, i. 25.
Menteith, Earl of, in 1291, takes the oath of homage to Edward I., i. 34.
Menteith, Alexander, earl of, invades England, i. 44; at the taking of the castle of Dunbar, 45; submits to Edward I., 45.
Menteith, Sir John, betrays Wallace to Edward I., i. 81; on his treachery to Wallace, 562, 365 *n.*
Menteith, Earl of, slain at Dupplin, i. 166.
Menteith, Earl of, in 1346, execution of, i. 194.
Menteith, Earl of, ii. 238, 240.
Menteith, Earl of, iii. 95.
Menteith, Countess of, accused of poisoning her husband, i. 8.
Menteith, Doune of, iv. 208.
Mercer, a naval adventurer, attacks Scarborough, i. 333; is captured, 333.
Mercer, a Scots merchant, wealth of, i. 351.
Mercer, Richard Hurt, iv. 121.
Merchants, Scots, dying abroad, ii. 74; their patriotism, iii. 18.
Merrimonth, William, "King of the sea," ii. 266.
Mesnaige, French ambassador, iii. 19.
Methven, defeat of the Scots at, i. 91.
Methven, Provost of, ii. 84.
Methven, Dr John, ii. 150.
Methven, third husband of the widow of James IV., ii. 369.
Methven, Paul, a Protestant preacher, iii. 84.
Mewtas, Sir Peter, iii. 26, 56, 62, 158.
Michael, the *Great*, a Scottish war-ship, ii. 279, 279 *n.*, 284, 286, 287.
Middlemore, Mr, iii. 291, 292.
Middleton, Gilbert de, a Border robber, i. 131.
Mildmay, Sir Walter, iii. 304, 333, iv. 135, 137.
Miltown Bog, i. 120.
Milltown, ii. 240.
Milanese, the, ii. 276.
Milford Haven, iv. 149.
Milles, Thomas, iv. 109, 129.
Miln, Walter, a converted priest, burnt, iii. 86.
Mines of gold and silver, ii. 55.
Mingarry, ii. 258.
Mingo, a valet-de-chambre, iii. 195.
Minto, Laird of, iii. 236.
Mitford castle, a Border stronghold, i. 131.
Mitton, battle of, i. 138.
Moffat, i. 169.
Momberneau, Monsieur, iv 22.
Money, the export of, i. 230.
Monimail, iii. 314.
Monipenny, William de, lord of Concressault, ii. 190, 207, 260, 262.
Monro of Foulis, ii. 312.
Montague College, Paris, ii. 268.
Montalembert, Andrew de, sieur d'Essé, iii. 67, 69.
Montbellegarde, Henry, count of, a foreign mercenary, i. 178.
Monte-alto, i. 22.
Montfichet, William de, i. 111.
Montfort, Simon de, mission of, i. 5, 353 *n.*
Montfort, Sir Simon, ii. 263.
Montgomerie, sieur de Lorges, iii. 13, 34.
Montgomery, Mr Robert, a minister, iv. 41-44, 46, 47, 92.
Montgomery, Sir John, hostage for Earl of Douglas, ii. 37.
Montgomery, constable of France, iii. 181.
Montreuil, negotiations of, i. 66.
Montrose, Wallace expels the English from, i. 52.
Montrose, Duke of, ii. 238, 239.
Montrose, Earl of, iii. 340, iv. 13, 15-17, 47, 60, 65, 71, 91, 106, 208.
Montrose, Master of, iii. 318.
Mons Meg, ii. 264, 393 *n.*
Moot Hill, the, iii. 66.
Moray, Edward I. in, i. 77.
Moray of Bothwell, Sir Andrew, adheres to the fortunes of Wallace, i. 51; invades the north of England, 56; espouses Christina Bruce, 147; chosen regent, 168; is taken prisoner at Roxburgh castle, 170; is released from captivity and returns to Scotland, 175; reduces Dundarg castle, 175; is elected to the joint regency, 176; attacks and routs the Earl of Athole, 179; is elected to the regency, 180; coolness of, in the wood of Stronkaltere, 181; makes a predatory excursion into England, 181; retires to Avoch, where he dies, 184; is buried in Dunfermline, 185; his character, 184.
Moray, Thomas Randolph, earl of, slain at Dupplin Moor, i. 166.
Moray, Earl of, rewarded for his services on the accession of Robert II., i. 327.
Moray, Earl of, entertains the French army in Scotland, i. 339; invades England, 340; at the battle of Otterburn, 347.
Moray, Earl of, ii. 165.
Moray, Earl of, ii. 351, 352.
Moray, Earl of, one of the council of regency, iii. 4, 6.
Moray, Bishop of, iii. 98.
Moray, Sir Thomas, slain at Harlaw, ii. 41.
Moray, Lord James, earl of, afterwards regent, embarks for France, iii. 68; aids in repelling an attack on Fife, 68; his first appearance in public life, 78; joins the queen-regent against the reformers, and is upbraided by Knox, 94; he regent having violated her promise he deserts her, 95; disclaims any idea of aspiring to the crown, 103; his position and character, 107, 108; is repulsed at Restalrig, 114, 120; accepts an embassy to France, 139, 139 *n.*; has an interview with Elizabeth, 143; also with Cecil, 144; proceeds to France, 144; visits Queen Mary, 145; inducements held out to him to embrace the Romish faith, 146; returns to Scotland, 148, 148 *n.*; he writes to Elizabeth on the subject of succession to the English crown, 156, 157; on his marriage is created Earl of Mar, 163; he represses tumults on the Borders, 163; is rewarded with the earldom of Moray, 166; his answer to Cecil on the subject of the queen's marriage, 171; his estrangement from Knox, 174; his letter to Cecil on the liberation of the Earl of Lennox, 180; he argues the acknowledgment of Queen Mary as the heir of Elizabeth, 189; he retires from court, 192; demands that justice be done on the Earl of

Bothwell, 193; his opposition to Mary's marriage with Darnley, 196, 197; his pretence that the Protestant religion was in danger, 202; is reconciled to Knox, 202; he refuses to attend a convention of the nobility, 203; his design against Mary, 204; is proclaimed a rebel, 207; flies to Carlisle, 212; has an interview with Queen Elizabeth, 212; is driven from the English court, 213; he joins the plot against Riccio, 217; returns to Edinburgh, 221; his intercession for the proscribed of his party, 225; he unites in advising Mary to procure a divorce, 230; requests permission to leave the kingdom, 242; is elected regent and prepares to leave France, 272; the French court seek to enlist him in their interest, 273; his interview with Queen Elizabeth, 273; arrives in Scotland and visits the queen, 274; his interview with Mary, 275; his conference with the English ambassador, 276, 277; takes measures for the punishment of the murderers of Darnley, 279; his complete sympathy with the reform party, 279; his partial and unjust conduct, 282-284; is informed of the queen's escape, 286; takes the field against her, 286; battle of Langside, 287, 288; he defeats the queen's troops and marches on the capital, 289; his negotiations with Queen Elizabeth, 292; his unpopularity in Scotland, 293; his harsh treatment of his opponents, 294; he appears at York and London as accuser of Queen Mary, 294-305; his critical position and dissimulation, 307; holds a convention of the estates, 308; his arbitrary proceedings, 309; his intrigues with the Duke of Norfolk, 309, 310; gives up the duke's letter to Elizabeth, 313; his designs against Lethington, 314, 316; by bribery he gets possession of the Earl of Northumberland, 317; secret negotiations with Elizabeth, 317-319; his assassination, 319, 320; his character, 321; his letters, 394 *n.*

Moray, Earl of, feud with the Earl of Huntly, iv. 182, 183.

Moray, Sheriff of, iv. 183.

More, Elizabeth, first wife of Robert II., i. 328.

More, Kenneth, ii. 70.

More, execution of, ii. 356.

Moret, Savoy ambassador, iii. 211.

Morgan, Thomas, an agent of Queen Mary's, iv. 114-116, 119-124, 126, 130.

Morham, Herbert de, put to death, i. 96, 96 *n.*

Morley, Lord, iv. 137.

Morpeth, ii. 306.

Mortimer, paramour of Isabella, queen of England, i. 148.

Mortimer, Catherine, is assassinated, i. 208; is buried in Newbattle abbey, 208.

Morton, Earl of, ii. 270, 293.

Morton, Earl of, iii. 67, 133, 168, 207; joins the plot against Riccio, 216; assists in his murder, 220; flies to England, 228; is pardoned, 232; apprised of the conspiracy against Darnley, 235, 254, 256, 259; coalition of, with the Protestant clergy, 268, 269, 282, 294, 304, 308, 314, 316, 318, 320, 323, 325, 327, 328, 338-340, 342, 349, 351; his treachery to the Earl of Northumberland, 353; chosen regent, 354, 355, 355 *n.*, 357; besieges Edinburgh castle, 360; rejects the terms of the besieged, 361; orders the execution of Kirkaldy, &c., 363; suppresses the tumults on the Borders, iv. 1; sends a memorial to Elizabeth, urging the necessity of a Protestant league, 1, 2; induces the Protestant clergy to resign into his hands the grant bestowed by Parliament, 2; the misery of the clergy through his proceedings, 3; his oppressive treatment of the citizens, 3; employs the justice-ayres as a means of plundering the community, 3; importunes Queen Elizabeth for money, 3; his vigilance against the intrigues of Mary, 5; agrees to put Mary to death on certain conditions, 6; writes to Leicester on the danger to Protestantism from continental intrigues, 6; receiving no answer he begins to cultivate the friendship of the French party, 7; sends back certain prisoners to Elizabeth, with a letter offering redress, 8; refuses to meet the president of the north, 8; he however consents, 8; such is the confidence of, that he walks abroad without a guard, 9; disaffection amongst the nobility, and in the Kirk, 9, 10; demands from the Countess of Argyle certain jewels which he declares to be the property of the state, 11; his policy, 11; writes to James against the Earls of Argyle and Athole, threatening to resign, 13; his resignation is demanded of him, 13; he resigns, and retires to one of his country seats, 13; he delivers up Edinburgh castle, &c., but requests that Parliament should pass an act approving of his administration, 13; holds a brief interview with the English envoy, 14; by intrigue regains all his former power without its responsibility, 14-16; appointed chief of a council to advise with the young king, 17; takes the field against the Earls of Athole and Argyle, 17; he agrees to peace, 17; persuades James to proceed with severity against the Hamiltons, 20; besieges the castle of Hamilton, and hangs the defenders, 20, 21; gives a banquet at Stirling to the nobles, 21; he is suspected of poisoning the Earl of Athole, 21; holds aloof from Esmé Stewart, 24; his jealousy of him, 24, 25; a rumour prevails that he had plotted to seize the king, 25; he declares his innocence, 25; resolves to retire from public affairs, 26, 27; the course he must follow to save himself from ruin, 28, 29; disregards the warning that his life is in danger, 31; is accused at the council-table of the murder of Darnley, 31; is arrested and lodged in Dumbarton castle, 31, 35; effects upon him of a prophetic warning, 35, 36; his demeanour in prison, 36; his trial, he is convicted upon his own confession, 36; his last hours, 36, 37; his execution, 37, 37 *n.*

Morton, John, a Jesuit, iv. 230, 231.

Motte, De la, French ambassador, ii. 284, 285, 294.

Mountjoy, Lord, iv. 301, 305.

Mounth, a range of hills, ii. 72.

Mowbray, Sir John de, engaged to capture Wallace, i. 81.

Mowbray, Sir Philip de, surrenders Stirling castle to the Scots, i. 123.

Mowbray, Lord, beheaded, ii. 32.
Moydart, John of, iii. 75.
Moydertach, of clan Ranald, ii. 366 *n.*
Mull of Kantire, descent upon by the Norwegians, i. 12.
Murchad, lord of Kantire, submits to Haco, king of Norway, i. 12.
Murimuth's, Adam, testimony to the clemency of Bruce, i. 134.
Murray of Tullibardine, Andrew, treachery of, i. 165; is made prisoner, and executed, i. 166.
Murray, Sir Patrick, iv. 258, 272.
Murray, Mr James, iv. 228.
Murray, Angus, chief of a clan, ii. 79.
Murray, Sir David, iv. 283.
Muscovy, Czar of, ii. 277.
Musgrave, Sir Thomas, made prisoner by Sir A. Douglas, i. 334.
Musgrave, an English leader at the battle of Solway Moss, ii. 374.
Musselburgh, iii. 57, 59.
Mutiny of the Welsh in Edward I.'s army, i. 62; they threaten to join the Scotch, 62.

N

Names of eight of the competitors for the Scottish crown, i. 32.
Namur, Earl of, and his foreign mercenaries, i. 178.
Napier, Alexander, ii. 126.
Napier, Barbara, accused of witchcraft, iv. 191.
Napier of Merchiston, John, iv. 208.
Naples, ii. 276.
Nau, Monsieur, Queen Mary's secretary, iv. 60 *n.*, 120, 121, 123, 125, 126, 128, 129, 131, 133, 134, 134 *n.*, 135, 142, 143.
Navarre, King of, iii. 141, 152.
Navarre, Princess of, iv. 170.
Navy, means taken to promote the, ii. 78.
Naworth castle, iii. 315, 325.
Neilston, Renfrewshire, ii. 216.
Nesbit Moor, battle of, ii. 23.
Nesbit, confidential servant of Morton, iv. 35.
Nevil, Sir Henry, iv. 278.
Neville, Robert de, defeated at Roslin, i. 75.
Neville, Sir Ralph, slain in a personal encounter by Douglas, i. 130.
Neville, earl of Westminster, ii. 32.
Neville, lord Fauconberg, ii. 185.
Neville Priory, ii. 86.
Newbattle, ii. 270.
Newbattle, Lord, iv. 270.
Newbattle, Abbot of, iv. 13, 49, 51.
Newcastle, Baliol is again summoned to attend Edward I. at, i. 43; the English nobles assemble a large army at, for the invasion of Scotland, i. 59.
Newhaven, iii. 79, 70 *n.*
New Temple, trees cut down at, i. 90.
Newton, Adam, of the Minorite friars of Berwick, his intercourse with Bruce, i. 133; robbed of his papers, 133.
Newton-Gordon, Laird of, iv. 225.
Nicolson, George, an English envoy, iv. 232, 233, 236, 241, 264, 265, 276, 286.
Nicolson, Mr James, a Scottish preacher, iv. 225, 250.
Niddry castle, iii. 285, 310.
Niddry, iv. 215.
Ninians, church of St, 117.
Noailles, Monsieur de, iii. 140, 148.
Nobles, names of the, who first joined Bruce, i. 88; names of, arrested by James I., ii. 53.
Norfolk, Duke of, the scourge of the Scots, ii. 330, 334, 364, 369, 372, 373.
Norfolk, Duke of, iii. 118, 122, 123, 289, 294-296, 298, 299, 304, 307, 309, 310, 311, 312-315, 342; his trial and execution, 343.
Norham, Bishop of Durham fords the Tweed at, 143.
Norham castle taken by James IV., ii. 289.
Normandy, iii. 168.
Normandy, duchy of, Edward I. a vassal of the King of France for the, i. 20.
Normans and Celts, ii. 69, 380 *n.*
Norris, iii. 302.
Northallerton burnt by Bruce, i. 135.
Northumberland, people of, purchase a truce from Bruce, i. 109.
Northumberland wasted by the Scots, i. 124.
Northumberland, Henry Percy, earl of, invades Scotland, encamps near Dunse, i. 332; takes Berwick, i. 333.
Northumberland, Earl of, conspiracy of the, ii. 31; he escapes into Scotland, 32; his death, 45.
Northumberland, Earl of, ii. 143.
Northumberland, Earl of, iii. 199, 310, 314, 315, 317-319, 324, 353.
Norway, iii. 279.
North Loch, iii. 82.
Notre-Dame, church of, ii. 258.
Norwegians, the, claim the Western Isles, i. 9.
Nottingham, Earl of, i. 334.
Noyon, treaty of, ii. 309.
Nuncios, Papal, stripped and plundered, i. 131.

O

Occurrents, Diurnal of, ii. 399 *n.*
Ochiltree, Lord, iii. 95, 217, 221, 288, 321, 326, 340, iv. 183, 184.
O'Connor, prince of Connaught, i. 114.
Octavian, an Italian officer, iii. 110.
Octavians, the financial advisers of James VI., iv. 239, 246, 249, 252, 253, 256.
O'Donnel, prince of Tirconnel, ii. 261, 261 *n.*
O'Donnel, prince of Connal, ii. 284, 285.
O'Donnel, an Irish chief, ii. 252.
Ogilvy, Sir Alexander, slain at Harlaw, ii. 41.
Ogilvy, Alexander, ii. 138.
Ogilvy of Innerquharity, ii. 140.
Ogilvy, Henry, ii. 44.
Ogilvy, Sir Patrick, ii. 64.
Ogilvy of Durness, ii. 341.
Ogilvy of Findlater, iii. 140.
Ogilvy, Lord, iii. 166, 325, iv. 12, 44.
Ogilvy, Gilbert, an attendant on James VI., iv. 201.
Ogilvy, Sir John, iv. 225.
Ogilvy, Powrle, a Catholic baron, iv. 309.
Ogle, Sir Robert, takes Wark castle, ii. 47, 49, 85.
Ogle, Mr, iv. 7.
Ogleface, lands of, ii. 147.

Olaf, king of Man, expelled his dominions, i. 10.
Olifant, Sir William, appointed governor of Stirling castle, i. 69.
Olifant, Sir William, proposes to surrender Stirling castle conditionally, i. 79; his terms refused by Edward I., 79; he fortifies the walls, 79; surrenders the castle, 81; is sent to the Tower, 81, 361 *n.*
Olifant, William, governor of Perth, i. 109.
Olifant, Lord, ii. 374, iii. 5, 325, 358.
O'Neill, an Irish chieftain, iv. 305.
Orkney and Shetland Isles, mortgage of, ii. 201, 202.
Orkney, Earl of, ii. 199.
Orkney, Earl of, iv. 49.
Orkney, Bishop of, iii. 251, 269, 294, 300, 304.
Orleans, Maid of, ii. 77.
Ormesby, William, made Justiciary of Scotland, i. 47.
Ormiston's accomplices in the murder of Darnley, iii. 282, 290.
Ormiston, Black, iii. 315.
Ormiston, Cockburn of, iii. 40-43, 113, 216, 256.
Ormond, a domain of the Douglases, ii. 133.
Ormond, Earl of, iii. 36, 39.
Ormond, Hugh, earl of, ii. 143, 164, 165.
Ormond, James, marquis of, ii. 231, 234, 244; Duke of Ross, 249, 252.
Ormond, Edward, messenger of Perkin Warbeck, ii. 260.
O'Rourke, an Irish chieftain, iv. 177.
Osmyn, Moorish governor of Granada, i. 162.
Ostmen, Irish, propose to submit to Haco, king of Norway, i. 12; supposed to be descendants of the Norwegians, i. 13 *n.*
Otterburn, Sir Adam, ii. 354, 356.
Otterburn, battle of, i. 347, 348.
Otterburn, Nicholas de, ii. 142.
Otterburn of Reidhall, provost of Edinburgh, iii. 23.
Oxford, Baliol college in, ii. 43.
Oxford, Countess of, ii. 31.
Oxford, Earl of, iv. 137.
Oxford University frequented by the youth of Scotland, i. 206.

P

Pacheco, Cardinal, iii. 211.
Padua, university of, iv. 277.
Paget, Charles, iv. 115-117, 119, 120.
Paget, Thomas, lord, iv. 114, 115, 309.
Polmais Thorn, ii. 126.
Palsgrave, the, iv. 177.
Panter, Secretary, ii. 310, 370, iii. 19, 50, 51.
Papal bull, reply of the Scottish Parliament to, i. 140.
Papal bulls, ii. 44.
Parbreath, Seaton, laird of, iv. 239.
Paris, Bruce's monument made at, i. 160.
Paris, Scottish college of, ii, 43.
Parkle of Linlithgow, James, ii. 84, 127.
Parliament, Scottish, assembles at Scone 1286, i. 24; Macduff found guilty by, 40; dismisses the English from Scotland, and declares war against Edward I., 41; they form an alliance with France, 41; confines Baliol and appoints a regency, 42; renounces allegiance to Edward I., 42; concludes a treaty of marriage with France, 42; held at Berwick by Edward I. of England, 46; held at Scone, 1318, to settle the succession to the throne, 135; sends a letter of remonstrance to Rome, 140; the Black, held 1320, 142; held at Cambuskenneth, 147; representatives of the third estate first appear in, 148; held to negotiate the ransom of David II., 202; summoned by David, and its enactments, 203; held at Scone 1363, and oppose the proposal of David regarding the succession to the crown, 210, 211; considers the ransom of David, 217-219, 372 *n.*; deals with the rebellious barons, 222; takes into consideration the defalcation of the royal revenue, 224, 376 *n.*, 225, 378 *n.*; assembles at Perth, and appoints committees to consider measures, 229; meets at Scone 1371, and passes laws affecting masterful beggars, 330, 331 *n.*; meets at Edinburgh, and enacts measures for the efficient defence of the country, 337; legislates on the tenure of property, ii. 15; on its succession, 15; on debtor and creditor, 16; on criminals, 16; on trial by single combat, 16; on game, 16; on weights and measures, 17; on judges, 17; on tenants' rights, 19; on unwholesome food, 19; meets at Perth, and declare James I. their lawful king, 35; meets 1424, and the Lords of the Articles become an acknowledged institution, 51; passes enactments regarding treason and sturdy mendicants, 52; customs and crown-lands, 53; taxes on land, 53, 54; on mines of gold and silver, 55; on cattle and skins, 55; pensions from the Pope, 56; rookeries, 56; archery, 56; meets at Perth 1426-27, passes laws regarding handicraftsmen and trade combinations, 73; on absenteeism, 73; the principle of representation is introduced, 74; wolves, fishing, trades, lepers, tenants, 75; dress, 77; arms, 78; war galleys, 78; advocates, 78; meets in 1438, and legislates on robbers, &c., 123, 124; meets in 1440, and considers the state of the country, 129, 130; meets at Stirling in 1449, preparations made for the marriage of James II., 144; meets at Edinburgh 1455, legislates on crown-lands, 168; on dress, 169; on the defence of the country, 170, 171; on booty, 171; meets in 1456, on national defence, 173, 174; on pestilence, 174; on money and coinage, 174, 175; on fairs and public markets, 176; meets in 1460, and appoints sessions for the distribution of justice, 188; meets in 1466, and legislates on pledges, 197; on coinage, 198; on almsgiving, 198; on foreign trade, 198; on shipping, 198; meets in 1482, 224 *n.*; meets in 1485, and negotiates with Richard III., 228, 230; meets in 1487-88, 233, 234; regarding the adherents of James III., 246; commerce, 248; coinage, 248; bullion, 248; meets in 1493 regarding trades, markets, fisheries, 256; the poor, 256, 257; meets in 1516, replies to Henry VIII., meets in 1524, its deliberations forcibly interrupted, 332; meets in 1528, and passes an act of attainder against the Douglases, 347; meets in

1532, and constitutes the College of Justice, 351; meets in 1540, annexes the Hebrides, &c., to the crown, 367; condemns heresy, 368; on the defence of the kingdom, 368; arms purchased, 369; meets in 1543 regarding the marriage of Queen Mary, iii. 8; the translation of the Bible, 9; measures against Protestants, 20; the assassins of Cardinal Beaton, 50; the marriage of Queen Mary with the Dauphin of France, 67; the licentiousness of the press, 72; the luxury of the table, 72; games, &c., 76; meets in Edinburgh, 1557, regarding the marriage of the Queen with the Dauphin, 78; meets in 1558 regarding measures against Protestants, 88, 89; meets in 1560 regarding the death of the Dauphin, 138; invites Mary to return to Scotland, 139; opened by Mary in person, 173; reverses the forfeiture of the Earl of Lennox, 185; regarding the sacrifice of the mass, 185; the treason of Moray, 218; the murder of Darnley, 244; Protestantism, 244; held in the regency of Moray, regarding the dethronement of Mary, 279; the reformation, 280; Mary's imprisonment, 281; held to appoint Morton regent, 354; regarding the Kirk, 357, 358; the treaty with England, 358; held by James VI. in 1578, in 1579, iv. 16; regarding the accusation of Morton, 33; held in 1584, the works of Buchanan proscribed, 79; held in 1592, the Kirk, 185; the Popish lords, 186, 210, 211; Episcopacy, 262; the state of the finances, 275; changing New-Year's day, 276; supplies for a war with England, 282; Gowrie conspiracy, 298.

Parliament, English, resolutions of, with regard to Baliol, i. 40; held at York, 68; held at Lincoln, debates the Pope's claim on Scotland, 72; recognises the independence of Scotland, 155.

Parliamentary representation, how it arose, ii. 74.

Parliament of Paris, ii. 351.

Parma, Prince of, iv. 165, 168.

Parry, Dr, iv. 89.

Parry's conspiracy, iv. 113.

Patriotism of the Scottish people, i. 48.

Paul, Signor, an agent of the Duke of Guise, iv. 43, 44.

Paul II., Pope, ii. 206.

Paul III., Pope, ii. 356.

Paulet, Sir Amias, Queen Mary's jailer, iv. 114, 122, 122 *n.*, 123-126, 130-133, 135, 137, 143, 144, 150-153, 156.

Pease Bridge, iii. 57.

Peaths, the, iii. 57.

Pembroke, Earl of, challenged by Bruce, i. 91; he surprises and routs Bruce's army, 91.

Pembroke, Earl of, iii. 304, 310, iv. 137.

Peniel Haugh, iii. 29.

Pennington, Sir John, ii. 143.

Pentland Firth, Haco encounters a storm in the, i. 17, iii. 68.

Pentland Moor, ii. 160.

Percy, Henry de, appointed keeper of Galloway, i. 47; sent with an army into Scotland, 51; marches towards Stirling, 53; negotiates with Comyn, 78; evacuates Turnberry castle, 97; intrigues with Baliol, 174.

Percy, Henry, surnamed Hotspur, at the siege of Berwick, i. 334; encounters Earl of Douglas, 346; battle of Otterburn, 347; is taken prisoner, 348; invades Scotland, ii. 23; battle of Nesbit Moor, 23; battle of Homildon, 28; atrocious cruelty, 28; rebels against Henry IV., 28; battle of Hartfield, 28; is slain, 28.

Percy, Henry, son of Hotspur, finds refuge in Scotland, ii. 32; is reinstated in his honours, 45.

Percy, Henry, ii. 159.

Percy, Sir Henry, iii. 99, 315.

Percy, Sir Charles, iv. 314.

Persons, an agent of Queen Mary, iv. 119, 240, 266, 309.

Perth, Edward I. celebrates the feast of the nativity of John the Baptist at, i. 45.

Perth, siege of, gallantry of a French knight at the, i. 109.

Perth, Bruce threatens to besiege, i. 107; strongly fortified by Edward I., 109; takes it by surprise, 109.

Perth stormed by Sir Simon Fraser, i. 168.

Perth, North Inch, battle of, ii. 4, 5.

Perth, important meeting held at, iii. 8.

Pestilence, a, desolates Scotland, i. 195, 208; of 1431, ii. 80.

Peter's pence, iii. 295.

Petronius, death of, ii. 216.

Pettie, castle of, ii. 341.

Pevensy, an English ship, iii. 53.

Phelipps, Thomas, a spy, iv. 114, 119-123, 123 *n.*, 124-127, 129, 133, 134.

Phidias, ii. 243.

Philip of France attempts to negotiate a peace between England and Scotland, i. 66, 358 *n.*; he succeeds, 70; deserts the cause of the Scots, 74.

Philip II., King of Spain, iii. 210, iv. 164, 165.

Philip the forester takes the castle of Forfar, i. 103.

Philpot, a London merchant, i. 333.

Picard, Sir Henry, a wealthy wine merchant, entertains five kings, i. 216.

Piers de Curry, killed in single combat, i. 16.

Pinkie house, seizure of, iii. 19.

Pinkie, battle of, iii. 60, 63, 376 *n.*

Pirate kings, chronicles of the, i. 17.

Pitmilly, Laird of, iii. 288.

Pitscottie, Lindsay of, ii. 130.

Pitarrow, Laird of, iii. 361.

Pittenweem priory, iii. 278.

Pius II., Pope, Æneas Sylvius, ii. 177, 242.

Pleasance, the, iii. 342.

Poisoning of physician of Margaret, i. 5.

Pole, Edmund de la, earl of Suffolk, ii. 276.

Pole, Richard de la, ii. 324.

Poley, an informer, iv. 114, 120, 129.

Polgilbe, now Loch Gilp, ii. 43.

Polwart, a Scottish preacher, iv. 46, 47, 75.

Polwarth, Lord, ii. 348.

Pont, Robert, a Scottish clergyman, iv. 42-44, 58, 67, 79, 97, 242.

Pontefract castle, English noble beheaded at, ii. 32.

Popish league, Queen Mary signs the, iii. 214.

Portuguese settlements, ii. 280.

Potterow gate, iv. 47.

Powrie, Baron of, ii. 237.

Powrie, William, iii. 282.
Prague, citizens of, ii. 81, iv. 20.
Presbyterian clergy, avaricious proceedings of Morton against the, iv. 3; his establishment of Episcopacy, 10; the General Assembly proceed against Episcopal innovations, 10; tulchan bishops, &c., 10; they determine to revise the church polity, 14; they are requested by a letter to abstain from debating the subject, 22; in reply send a deputation to the king with certain requests, 23; struggle between Episcopacy and Presbyterianism, 40; "the Second Book of Discipline," 40; collusion and simony in the bestowal of the bishopric of Glasgow, 41; they interdict Montgomery from accepting it, 42; their resistance to Episcopacy, 43-48; they support the Ruthven lords, 50-66; Episcopacy established, 263.
Pressen, warden of Jedburgh, captures Regent Moray, i. 179.
Preston of Craigmillar, iii. 140, 288.
Preston, Dr, nearly poisoned, iv. 21.
Preston, John, a Scottish minister, iv. 242.
Preston, Sir John, iv. 258.
Prestonpans, iii. 57.
Privateers, Scottish, i. 182.
Privy Council, lords of the, iii. 233.
Privy Council, Irish, iii. 39.
Professors, first, of the University of St Andrews, ii. 43.
Protestant party, its early converts, iii. 40; its professors represented as enemies to their country, 40; aroused into activity by the presence of Knox, 82; divided as to the ceremony of the mass, 82; it is renounced and a formal separation made from the Catholic Church, 83; its most prominent adherents, 83; Knox's advice to them, 84; growing lukewarm, but on receiving a letter from Knox, draw up the first covenant, 85; pass a resolution respecting public worship, 85; their remonstrances against the execution of Miln, 87; present a supplication to Parliament, 88, 89; reformed opinions publicly avowed by the city of Perth, 91; determination of the people to protect their ministers, 91; their letters in justification of their proceedings, 93; a second covenant drawn up, 95; assemble on Cupar Moor, 96; they enter into negotiations with Elizabeth, 101; they take possession of Edinburgh, 112; sustain a repulse, retires and send a deputation to Elizabeth for aid, 114, 115; the ground on which they claim that aid, 116; they destroy the altars and images in the chamber of Glasgow, 117; they form a treaty with Elizabeth, 118; an English army joins them at Preston, 118; another covenant is drawn up by the Lords of the Congregation, 120; their desire for peace, 122; negotiations, 123; the treaty agreed to leads to the establishment of the Reformation, 124; they present a petition to Parliament, praying that the Catholic Church should be condemned and abolished, 127, 128; the Confession of Faith is laid before Parliament, 129; it receives their sanction, 130; they compose a book of discipline, 131; its hostile reception by Parliament, 131; they receive the news of the death of Queen Mary's husband with exultation, 138; that event involves a change in their policy, 138; they send Moray to Queen Mary, inviting her return to Scotland, 139; his instructions, 139, 140; the dependent condition of the Protestant clery, 159; a third of the revenue of the Catholic benefices is granted for the maintenance of Protestant preachers, the endowment of schools, &c., 159; the violent conduct of Knox and others, 168; the Presbyterians in their treatment of Papists take the law into their own hands, 172; they are opposed to the Queen's marriage with Darnley, 196; they declare they see in it the destruction of the country, 201; the General Assembly sends a supplication to the Queen, 203; they appeal to Elizabeth for aid, 210; Mary having joined the Popish league the Protestant leader resolve on her dethronement, 214; they are made acquainted with the design to murder Riccio, 219; the Church refuses to proclaim the banns of the Queen's marriage with Bothwell, 250; decrees confirming the establishment of Protestantism, &c., 261; they maintain the responsibility of princes, 267; and that Mary should be arraigned, 268; they are divided as to whether the king should be anointed, 269; laws passed favourable to their religious opinions, 281; they espouse the cause of Lennox and Elizabeth, 335; they summon a convention to consult on the conspiracies of the Papists, 349; an important ecclesiastical measure carried, 357; comparative strength of, in the reign of James VI., iv. 175, 279.
Prussia, English nobles engage in an expedition against, i. 206, 224.
Puckering, attorney-general, iv. 138.
Puritans, English, iv. 177.

Q

Quatremars, John of, accompanies Edward III., i. 148.
Queen of Robert Bruce given up to the English, i. 94.
Queensferry, an English crew lands at, i. 335.
Queensferry, Lombard merchants offer to establish a manufacturing settlement there, i. 23.
Quhete or Chattan, clan of, ii. 4.
Quin, Walter, an Irish poet, iv. 266.

R

Rachrin, isle of, i. 96.
Ragman Roll, the, returned to Scotland, i. 157.
Raid of Eskdale, the, ii. 275.
"Raid of Ruthven," iv. 49. *See* Ruthven.
Ralph the Cofferer, cruelly put to death, i. 75.
Ramorgny, Sir John, companion of the Duke of Rothesay, ii. 20; betrays him to the Duke of Albany, 21.
Ramsay of Dalhousie, Alexander, relieves Dunbar castle, i. 183; takes Lord Robert Manners prisoner, 184; takes Roxburgh castle by escalade, 188; is appointed by the

king to the sheriffship of Teviotdale, 188; is treacherously seized by Sir W. Douglas, 188; dies of hunger in Hermitage castle, 188.
Ramsay of Ochterhouse, i. 126.
Ramsay, Lord Bothwell, ii. 252, 260.
Ramsay, Sir Alexander, at Homildon, ii. 25.
Ramsay, Sir William, fatally wounded, 183.
Ramsay, Alexander, takes Berwick, i. 333.
Ramsay, Alexander, iii. 337.
Ramsay, John, page of James VI., iv. 293.
Ranald of the Isles assassinated by the Earl of Ross, i. 190.
Rannoch, Loch, ii. 258.
Randan, the Sieur de, iii. 122, 124, 125.
Randolph, Sir Thomas, appears at Holywell Haugh for John Baliol, i. 32.
Randolph, Sir Thomas, afterwards Earl of Moray, taken prisoner at battle of Methven, i. 91; his relationship to Bruce, 91; he deserts him, 91; captures Bruce's banner, 99; is taken prisoner by Douglas, 105; his interview with Bruce, 105; is imprisoned, 105; joins Bruce, 105; takes Edinburgh castle, 112; is one of the leaders at Bannockburn, 115; is intrusted to guard the entrance to Stirling castle, 116; is reproved by Bruce for carelessness, 116; desperate encounter with English cavalry, 117, 118; his division encounters the main body of the English army at Bannockburn, 119; he accompanies Edward Bruce to Ireland, 126; he assists at the siege of Berwick, 134; is appointed tutor to the heir of Scotland, 135; joins with Douglas to carry off the Queen of England, 138; in one expedition he aids in burning and pillaging 84 English towns and villages, 139; the battle of Mitton, 139; he harasses the English army, 144; forces the pass at the battle of Biland Abbey, 145; he is sent on an embassy to Rome, 146; repairs to the court of France, 146; invades England, 151; takes post at Wear, 151; his skilful retreat, 153; accompanies Bruce's son to Berwick, 157; is nominated regent, 161; his impartial administration of justice, 161; his sudden death, 164, 369 *n.*; his character, 164.
Randolph, Thomas, joins the Protestant party, iii. 111; is instructed by Elizabeth as to the policy he is to pursue, 141; his satirical description of the divisions of the Church lands, 160; his opinion of Queen Mary, 160; on the opposition given by the clergy to the visit of the Queen to England, 161; his letters on the Arran plot and the marriage of the Regent Moray, 163; his interview with Queen Mary, 164; he sees something which filled him with suspicion, 165-168; encourages Scottish volunteers to join the Huguenots, 171; writes to Cecil, 176; his interview with Mary on the subject of her marriage, 177; is in communication with Knox, 178, 179; writes to Cecil, 184, 185, 185 *n.*; he visits Queen Mary at St Andrews, 186-190; writes to Cecil on the expected trial of Bothwell, 193; remarks on the obstinacy of the Queen, 194; on the poverty of the Earl of Lennox, 195; on Church deliberations, 196; writes to Cecil regarding Darnley, 201; the character of his letters, 205, 206; his interview with Lennox and Darnley, 206; his seditious intrigues, 207, 208; his defiant answer to the Privy Council, 209; is banished to Berwick, 215; writes to Cecil regarding the assassination of Riccio, 218-222; his interview with Elizabeth, 249, 250, 259; is again sent to Scotland, 323; arrives in Edinburgh, 324; recommences his intrigues, 325; is blamed as the author of much of the misery which existed, 326; his portrait of Lethington, 326; he writes to Kirkaldy, 331; writes to Sussex, 338; is written to by Lethington, 334; despatched to James VI. and the regent by Elizabeth, iv. 12; his letter to Killigrew on the resignation of Morton, 13; has an interview with Morton, 14; is despatched to Scotland to save Morton, 32; makes a great effort before Parliament to save the exregent, 33; succeeds in forming a confederacy against Lennox, 34; his share in the plot being discovered, he has to fly, 35; on being informed of the "raid of Ruthven," requests again to be sent to Scotland, 50; sent to Scotland to negotiate a treaty, 108; procures the king's signature to a treaty, 169; warns Elizabeth of a plot against her life, 109; induces King James to pardon Archibald Douglas, 111.
Randolph, Young, slain at the battle of Dupplin, i. 166.
Ransom, mode of, ii. 30, 31.
Ratcliffe, Roger, ii. 330, 331.
Rattray, Erskine, conspires against Bruce, i. 142.
Raulet, a Frenchman, iii. 192, 211.
Redesdale, ravaged by the Scottish army, i. 44.
Red Lion, the herald, iv. 222, 224.
Reformation. *See* Protestant party.
Regency formed at Kelso abbey, i. 6.
Reid, bishop of Orkney, iii. 7.
Reid, president of the Session, iii. 73, 79.
Reid, confidential servant of Morton, iv. 35.
Renfrew, Edward II. marches to, i. 108.
Reoch, Robert, ii. 138.
Resby, John, a Wickliffite, burnt, ii. 37, 62.
Restalrig, iii. 114, 118.
Restalrig, Laird of, iii. 361.
Revenues, delapidated state of crown, i. 224.
Rheims, iv. 115.
Rhymer, Thomas the, i. 91 *n.*
Rhymer's Fœdera, i. 51, *passim.*
Rhynd, Mr William, iv. 287, 288, 290, 296.
Riccarton, Hepburn of, iii. 285, 286, 290, 299.
Riccio, David, iii. 192, 210, 211, 213, 214; plot against his life, 215, 216; his assassination, 220, 220 *n.*
Riccio, Joseph, iii. 224, 233, 234, 239.
Richard I., i. 159.
Richardson, treasurer, iii. 312.
Richmond, Earl, compels Bruce to retreat, i. 102; made prisoner by Bruce, 145.
Richemont, Thomas de, slain by Douglas, i. 129.
Rivers, Lord, iv. 214, 216.
Rob of the Langholm, iv. 244.
Robert II., High Steward, ascends the throne, i. 32; is crowned at Scone, 327, 327 *n.*; is opposed to the English raids of his Border

nobles, 336; is averse to a war with England, 339; becomes infirm, 345; dies at Dundonald castle, 351; is buried at Scone, ii. 1.
Robert III., John, earl of Carrick, crowned king as, ii. 1; his character, 1, 2; resigns the government to the Duke of Albany, 2; gives orders for the arrest of the Duke of Rothesay, 21; his anxiety for the safety of his second son, the Earl of Carrick, 33; sends him to France, 33; remonstrates on his captivity by the king of England, 33; his death, 34; his character and personal appearance, 34, 35; is interred in Paisley abbey, 35; his children, 35.
Robertson, a warder in Dumbarton castle, iii. 336.
Rochelle, port of, ii. 86.
Roches, Oliver de, a servant of Philip of France, i. 106.
Rochfort, lordship of, ii. 178.
Rogers, a professor of music, ii. 213, 243.
Roger Kirkpatrick, overcomes Niddesdale, i. 196.
Rokeby, Sir Thomas, taken prisoner, i. 151; set at liberty by Douglas, 151; guides the English army to where the Scots are encamped, 151.
Rollock, a Scottish minister, iv. 255, 277, 278.
Rome, artists of, i. 307.
Ronald, a Protestant martyr, iii. 21.
Ronsard, the poet, iii. 170.
Rookeries, enactment against, ii. 56.
Roslin, battle of, i. 75; the English army entirely routed, 75, 359 *n.*
Roseneath, ii. 169.
Rose, Euphemia, second wife of Robert I., i. 328.
Ross, Robert de, deprived of influence, i. 6.
Ross, Earl of, assassinates Ranald of the Isles, i. 190.
Ross, John, earl of, rebels against James II., ii. 152, 165.
Ross of Halket, Sir John, ii. 145, 200.
Ross, Countess of, ii. 70, 71,
Ross, John, earl of, rebels against James III., ii. 191; is outlawed, 210; he surrenders, 211.
Ross, Euphemia, wife of Sir W. Lesley, ii. 39, 131.
Ross of Montgrenan, ii. 246, 247.
Ross, death of Duke of, ii. 306.
Ross, Countess of, ii. 171, 172.
Rothesay castle taken by the Norwegians, i. 12.
Rothes, Master of, ii. 374, iii. 22, 26; at the battle of Ancrum, 29, 30, 45; joins in the murder of Cardinal Beaton, 46, 47.
Rothes, Earl of, iii. 79, 221, 294, 359, iv. 47, 60, 106.
Rothiemurchy, ii. 341.
Rouen, iii. 71, 71 *n.*
Rouge Croix, a herald, ii. 290.
Rough, John, a Protestant preacher, iii. 9, 12, 20, 52.
Row, a reformer, iii. 126, 261.
Roxburgh castle surrendered to Edward I., i. 45; taken by Sir J. Douglas, 111; James II. killed at, ii. 185.
Rubay, Monsieur de, iii. 75, 76, 116.
Rufus, William, knighted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, i. 3.
Russell, Lord, iv. 100-103, 168.
Russell, John, city orator, iv. 173.
Russell, Master John, iv. 173.
Russell, Mr John, an advocate, iv. 212.
Russell, Sir Francis, iv. 7.
Russel, an English baron, suspected of poisoning Comyn, i. 8; is imprisoned, i. 8, 8 *n.*
Russel, Lord, ii. 210.
Russel, a gray friar, ii. 263, 264.
Rutherglen castle, siege of, i. 106, 366 *n.*
Ruthven, Alexander, iv. 285, 287, 297.
Ruthven, Andrew, iv. 295.
Ruthven, Sir William, ii. 136.
Ruthven, Lord, joins James III. against the rebellious nobles, ii. 236; slain, 241.
Ruthven, Lord, denounces Mary of Guise, iii. 112; joins the plot against Riccio, 216; assists in the murder of Riccio, 220; betrayed by Darnley, and flees to England, 223.
Ruthven, Lord William, iii. 26; his reply to Mary of Guise, 91, 95, 204, 215; assassinates Riccio, 220, 223, 232, 258, 261, 264.
Ruthven, Lord, iv. 9, 12, 13; is created Earl of Gowrie, 39, 42, 47; is informed of Lennox's plot, 48; seizes the king's person, 49; with his fellow-conspirators rejects the overtures of Lennox, and commands him to leave the country, 51; declines to give up to the English ambassador the casket which contained Mary's letters to Bothwell, 54, 55, 55 *n.*; begins to fear for his safety, 61; determines to make his peace with the king, 65; conspires against the Earl of Arran, 73; is arrested, 74; visited in prison by Arran and others, 75; is treacherously entangled, 75; his sentence and execution, 76, 76 *n.*
Ruthven, Lady Beatrix, iv. 280, 298, 300.
Ruthven castle, iv. 49, 50, 223.
Rutland, Earl of, iv. 137.
Rydon, Vice-Admiral of England, ii. 268.

S

Sacrobasco, Johannes de, i. 289.
Sadler, Sir Ralph, agent of Henry VIII., ii. 308, 359, 364, 365, 370, 371; intrigues with the Scots nobility, iii. 9-15, 19, 32, 61, 108, 109, 294, 297, 346, iv. 137.
Salisbury, meeting of plenipotentiaries before Edward I. at, i. 26.
Salisbury, Earl of, at siege of Dunbar, i. 182, ii. 143, 159, 179.
Salisbury, Earl of, and Isle of Man, i. 216.
Salkeld, Lord Scorpe's deputy, iv. 243.
Salmon, salted, i. 103; laws affecting, ii. 153.
Saltoun, Lord, iii. 326.
Sampson, Agnes, accused of witchcraft, iv. 180.
Sanda, isle of, iii. 40.
Sandilands, Sir James, iii. 83, 88, 133, iv. 194.
Sandilands, Sir John, murder of, ii. 153.
Sanquhar, the parson of, iii. 173.
Sark, battle on the river, ii. 143, 144.
"Saturday Slap," ii. 55.
Sauchie Burn, ii. 239.
Savage, John, a Roman Catholic gentleman, iv. 115, 116, 129, 132.

Savoy, Duchess of, ii. 283.
Savoy, Duke of, ii. 144.
Scala Chronicle, the, i. 205.
Scarborough burnt by Bruce, i. 135.
Schaw of Sauchie, Sir James, ii. 215.
Schevez, archbishop of St Andrews, ii. 207, 217, 222, 227, 230, 246.
Scone abbey, the stone in, on which the kings of Scotland were crowned and anointed, carried away by Edward I., i. 4, 7.
Scone, a parliament assemble at, 1318, and determine the succession to the throne, i. 135.
Scone abbey and palace burnt by the Protestants, iii. 98.
Scotland, ancient State of,—*General appearance of the country*, i. 232; dissimilarity of appearance in the 14th and 19th centuries, 233; vast forests, 233; abound in deer, &c., 233; chief source of wealth, 233; grant by David I. to the monks of Holyrood, 234; where there are now morasses, formerly interminable forests, 234, 234 *n.*; efforts of Richard II. to destroy them, 234; singular grant of land by David II., 234; savage animals abounded, 234; extensive marshes, 234; the retreats of the Scots during the wars of independence, 234; royal castles, their imposing appearance, 235; number delivered up to Baliol by Edward I., 235; different policy pursued with respect to castles by the Scots and English, 235; new style introduced by the English, 235; baronial castles and towers, number of, 236; the protection yielded by them to the vassals of the lord, 236; to such protection we owe the rise of our towns and royal burghs, 236; vast possessions of the feudal barons, 236; convents and religious houses, 237; improved condition of the vassals of the Church, 237; the village of Boden in the time of Alexander III., 237; rent paid by the cottagers to the monks of Kelso, 237; the cottars bound to the soil, 237, 380 *n.*; picturesque appearance of the ecclesiastical edifices, &c., 237; the richest spots selected for their sites, 237; opulence of the clergy, 238; state of agriculture, 238; the royal manors, 238; royal grants to religious houses, 238, 239; leases granted by the abbots of Scone and Kelso, 239; the grains principally cultivated, 239; accounts of Great Chamberlains, 239, 367 *n.*; accounts of Edward I., 239; compensation given for crops destroyed, 239; great number of brew-houses, 240; the consumption of ale, 240; the kind of bread in general use, 240; the price of pease and beans, 240; the multitude of cows, sheep, and swine, 240; the latter the food of the lower classes, 240; horses, wild and domesticated, 240, 240 *n.*; number of, possessed by the monks of Melrose, 241; attention paid to rearing sheep and cattle, 241; "white sheep," 241, 241 *n.*; wool and skins, how manufactured, 241; proportion of cows to every plough, 241; goats, 241; dairy produce, 241; the exactions of the clergy, 241; a cheap hen, 242; the necessaries of life abundant, 242; fish of all kinds an article of general consumption, 242; herrings purchased by Edward I. for his Scottish garrisons, 242; the Firth of Forth resorted to for fish by Belgic and English fishermen, 242.
Distinct races in Scotland—four, i. 242; the districts which they occupied, 243; their jealousy of each other displayed at the battle of the Standard, 243; the opinion of Robert de Bruce on the enmity which subsisted between the Islesmen and the Normans, 243; the appearance and manners of the Galwegians, 244; their arms, 244; superiority of the men of Lothian and the south, 244; the distinction between the Gaelic-speaking population and the Saxons, 244; Malcolm Canmore acts as interpreter between his queen and the Gaelic chiefs and clergy,—traces of the Scandinavian race among the people, 245; their settlements in Caithness and Ross-shire, 245; blending of the Saxon and Norman population, i. 245; gradually gain the greater part of the country from the Gaels, 245; the constitution of the government becomes feudal, 245; the position occupied by the sovereign, 245; his power not despotic, 245; provision made for the maintenance of the crown, 245; gift by Edgar to David I., 245; personal estate of the king at that period, 245; David I. bestows Cumberland on his son William, 245; another son holds still more extensive possessions, 246; riches of the revenue, 246; large sums disbursed by William the Lion, 246; annual revenue of Alexander II., 246; flourishing condition of the royal revenue under Alexander III., 246; the source of revenue, 246, 247; personal state of the Scottish kings, 247; rich in feudal pomp before the war of independence, 247; unusual splendour introduced to the Scottish court by the queen of Malcolm Canmore, 247; intercourse of Scotland with the East during the reign of Alexander I., 247; the effects of this shewn in a singular ceremony which took place in the High Church of St Andrews, 247; extravagant conduct of Alexander III., 247; ministers of state, 248; their duties, 248; the king the fountain of justice, 248; picture of David I., 248; the administration of justice, 248; the justiciar of Lothians, 249; the civil and criminal administration in the time of Bruce, 249; the office of Chancellor, 249; its antiquity, 249; existed in France during the reign of Charlemagne, in England at the time of the Saxons, 249; list of these great officers before the time of Bruce, 249; the office existed till the union of the two kingdoms, 250; the office of sheriff, 250; its antiquity, 250; becomes general as the Scoto-Saxons gain the ascendancy, 250; number of sheriffdoms in the time of Edward I., 250; powers assumed by the higher nobles and ecclesiastics of holding courts, 250; when it originated, 250; the Abbot of Aberbrothoc, 251; policy pursued by Bruce to weaken the superior barons, 251; how causes of importance were determined, 252; an assize held in 1186, 252; dispute between the monastery of Soltre and the inhabitants of the manor of Crailing, how it was settled, 252; the office of constable, 252; duties of

this officer, distinction between marischal and constable, 252; offices of seneschal and chamberlain, 252; inferior offices, 252; distinction of ranks, 252; the free farmers, 252; curious proof of their personal freedom at the time of the Maiden of Norway, 253; cottars or bondsmen, 253; their condition that of slaves, 253; a number of examples, 253, 253 *n.*; rights of feudal superiors, 254; genealogy of bondsmen carefully preserved, 254, 832 *n.*; their relationship to their owners, 255; convention between the Bishop of Moray and Walter Comyn, 255, 382 *n.*; mark of a freeman, 255; charter granted by Bruce, 255; the right of manumission, 255; abolition of bondage, 256.

Ancient Parliaments of Scotland,—i. 256; proofs that no parliament existed during the reigns of Alexander I., David I., Malcolm IV., William the Lion, and Alexander II., 256, 257; "great gathering" held by Alexander III., 258; the first parliament, 259; parliament at Brigham, 259; first deed in which the burgesses appear, 260; first parliament in which royal burghs are represented, 260; its proceedings, 260; parliaments held in 1315 and 1318, 261; parliament held at Cambuskenneth, the three estates represented, 261; parliament held at Scone in 1363, names preserved of the merchants who represented there the royal burghs, 263; first parliamentary committee, 263; burgesses elected to attend parliament 1367, parliament of 1368 recognises the practice of sending commissioners, 263; dangerous extent to which parliamentary committees was carried in the reign of David II., 264; business entrusted to these committees, 265.

Early commerce and navigation,—i. 264; early intercourse of the Scots with the Continent, 264; wealthy condition of Scotland in the reign of Macbeth, 264; rich dresses imported by Malcolm III., 264; Asiatic luxuries of Alexander I., 264; grant by Edgar to the Church of Durham, 264; prosperity in the reign of David I., 264; Perth, Stirling, and Aberdeen resorted to by foreign merchants, 265, influx of Flemish merchants, 265; their influence in humanising the Scots, 265; traces of them to be found in various districts of Scotland, 265; they improve the domestic manufactures of the country, 265; the dangerous character of the Scottish coasts breed up a race of hardy seamen, 266; early intercourse of the Western Isles with Norway, 266; high state of the arts and manufactures in these islands, 266; they are made the receptacles of piratical plunder, 266; a Galloway chief fits out a fleet of 150 vessels, 266; the navy an object of royal attention, 266; a powerful French baron has a ship built at Inverness, 266; high reputation of the ship carpenters of Scotland, 266; in naval and in commercial enterprise the clergy take the lead, 266; the staple exports, 267; resources of Gilbert, lord of Galloway, 267; growing wealth of the mercantile and trading interests, 267; proofs in the increasing shipwrecks, &c., 267; in consequence of this, Alexander III. forbids exportation of any merchandise, 267; rise of towns and royal burghs, 268; the Celts opposed to settle in towns, 268; protection given to traders and manufacturers by the barons and clergy, 268; form themselves into associations, and purchase peculiar privileges from the sovereign, 266; become chartered corporations, 268; formed a check upon the arrogance of the nobility, 269; English merchants settle at an early period in Scotland, 269; the earliest burghs, 269; their number in the reign of David II., 269; the position of royal burghs towards the crown, 269; the privileges enjoyed by these communities, 270; the court of the four burghs, 270; code of mercantile law, 270; rise of villages into burghs, 270; the principle of monopoly, 270; burghs a place of refuge to fugitive vassals, 271; the law gave a stimulus to traders, 271; Berwick the great mart of foreign commerce, 271; an example of the wealth of its merchants, 271; from its opulence, is distinguished by the name, a second Alexandria, 272; its export of salmon, 272; its customs under Alexander III. equal to a fourth of those of all England, 272; constitution of the towns and burghs, 272; opulence of Perth, 272; pearls one of the articles of export, 272; their inferiority to Oriental pearls, 273; greyhounds exported to France, 273; imports, 273; fruitless attempts of Edwards I. and II. to extinguish the foreign trade of Scotland, 273; the plunder of Bannockburn and the fruits of raids into England, perceptibly affected commercial speculation, 273, 274; formidable character of the Scottish navy in 1334, 275; how fleets were fitted out, 275; tonnage of English vessels, 275; greater magnitude of those employed by Scottish cruisers, 275; pusillanimous conduct of the English navy, 276; superiority of the Scottish navy in the reign of David II., 276; wages of labour, and prices of the necessaries of life, 277; silver the early coinage of Scotland, 277, 277 *n.*; most ancient specimens, 277; an improvement in the mode of stamping borrowed from England, 277; what caused the alteration, 277; debasement in value of the coinage—foreigners the coiners of that period, 278; pay of the Master of the Mint, and his workmen, 279; rise in the price of the necessaries of life, 279; the workmen try to raise their wages, 279; statute for labourers, 279; value of a pound of silver, 280 *n.*; the prices of grain, cattle, &c., 280, 281; rate of wages, 281; comfortable condition of the lower orders, 281; prices of clothes, 282; of wine, 282; of gold, 282; rent and value of land, 283.

State of the Early Scottish Church,—i. 284; the Catholic Church interdict the unrestricted use of the Scriptures by the laity, 284; ignorance the character of the age, 284; relations of the Church with Rome, 284; independence of the Scottish Church effected, 285; the clergy most enlightened agents in carrying out the designs of David I., 285; his great liberality to the ecclesiastical orders, 285; a tincture of

heresy in the early Scottish Church, 285; dexterity and boldness in resisting the attempts of Henry II. of England, 285; becomes involved in a contention with the Popedom, 285; Clement III. bestows important privileges upon the Scottish Church, 286, 287; opposition given by Kings of Scotland to the assumptions of Rome, 287, 288; progress in arts and literature to be found only among the clergy, 288; John Duns Scotus lectures at Oxford, 288; Peter the Lombard, his "Four Books of the Sentences," 289; scholastic theology, 289; high reputation of Scottish scholars, 289; Michael Scott, 290; John Suisset, the mathematician, 290; literary attainments of the nobility, 290; studies of the times deemed unworthy of the aristocracy, 291; schools established in the chief towns, and in the monasteries and convents, 291; rector of St Andrews, 291; the study of the civil and canon laws, 291; register-books of the monasteries, 292; monkish annalists—Barbour, 292; Thomas the Rhymer, 293; his romance of Sir Tristrem, 293, 293 *n.*; the language in which he wrote, 294, 295; romance writers and minstrels, 296; addiction of the Gothic tribes for poetry, 296; singing in parts, 297; musical instruments in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, 297; reception of kings, 297; Scottish ballad composed on Bannockburn, 298, 298 *n.*; popularity of the story of Robin Hood, 298; the clergy the enemies of the minstrels, 298; antiquity of Scottish melodies, 299; church music imported at an early age from the Continent, 299; introduction of organs and choral services, 299, 300; historians, painters, &c., 300; dwellings and forts, architecture of, 300, 305; monasteries and cathedrals, 305; conjectural origin of the Gothic style, 306; corporation of architects in the middle ages, Christopher Wren on the, 307.

Sports and Amusements,—i. 308; facilities for hunting, 308; anecdote of Malcolm Canmore, 308; ancient customs of the chase, 309; fondness of the Scots for hawking, &c., 309; Scottish staghounds, 311; hawks of Norway, 311; feasts and banquetings, 311, 312; chess and dice, 311; dawn of chivalry in Scotland, 312; its progress, 313; tournaments, 314; battles of Bannockburn, Poictiers, and Cressy compared, 314, 315; chivalrous character of Bruce, 315; dress, arms, and warlike accoutrements, 315, 325, 382 *n.*, 383; state of some of the useful and ornamental arts, 326, 327.

Scotland, divided into four districts, i. 24; its independence acknowledged by the English Parliament, 154; ravaged by inundations and pestilence, 207, 208; rapid growth of the trade of, 209; state of agriculture in, 351; trade of, with France, ii. 281; state of, after Flodden, 295.

Scotsman, a, in the English army, offers to shew Bruce how he might surprise it, i. 118.

Scott, Michael, i. 290.

Scott, Sir Walter, at Homildon, ii. 25.

Scott, Sir William, ii. 305.

Scott of Branxholm, Watt, iv. 244.

Scott of Goldielands, Watt, iv. 244.

Scott of Harden, Watt, iv. 244.

Scott of Haining, Robert, iv. 243.

Scott of Tushielaw, ii. 349.

Scrope, Lord, governor of Carlisle castle, iv. 244, 245.

Scrope, Lord, beheaded, ii. 32.

Scrope, Lord, iii. 228, 264, 328, iv. 91.

Scrope, Lady, iii. 289, 296.

Seagrave, John de, appointed governor of Scotland, i. 14.

Seagrave, made prisoner at Bannockburn, exchanged for five Scottish barons, i. 123.

Secret council, lords of the, iii. 258-264, 266.

Selby, Walter, a Border robber, i. 131; is executed, 190.

Selves, Monsieur de, iii. 68.

Sempil, Sir James, iv. 272.

Sempill, Robert, ii. 136.

Seminara, battle of, ii. 276.

Semple, Lord, iii. 286, 293, 314, 318, 340, 344.

Seton, Sir Alexander, president of the Session, iv. 251, 253, 269, 270, 282, 283, 315.

Seton, Sir Christopher, rescues Bruce, i. 91.

Seton, Christopher de, taken prisoner by the English and hanged, i. 95; Bruce erects a chapel to his memory, 95, 366 *n.*

Seton, Lord Alexander, seneschal of Bruce, i. 133.

Seton, Alexander, slain by the English, i. 164.

Seton, Sir Alexander, earl of Huntly, ii. 141, 158, 159, 162, 180.

Seton, Lord, iii. 6, 6 *n.*, 78, 79, 241, 260, 285, 325, 359, iv. 40, 44, 49, 60.

Seton, Sir John, hostage for Earl of Douglas, ii. 37.

Seton, Sir John, iv. 27, 38, 55.

Seton, Thomas, a hostage hanged by Edward III., i. 71, 369 *n.*

Seton castle, iii. 239.

Serle, plot of, a retainer of Richard II., ii. 31.

Shaw, George, ii. 329 *n.*

Shaw of Sauchie, James, ii. 235, 239.

Shaw, leader of the clan Kay, ii. 5.

Sheep, white, exempted from taxation, i. 222, 230 *n.*

Shrewsbury, Earl of, ii. 322.

Shrewsbury, Earl of, iii. 68, 382 *n.*, 69, 302, 310, iv. 62, 152, 153, 155, 156, 158.

Shrines, passion of Scottish knights for visiting foreign, i. 220.

Sicily, King of, ii. 192.

Sidney, Sir Henry, i. 165.

Sidney, Sir Philip, i. 349.

Sigismund, Duke of Austria, ii. 95, 144.

Silva, Guzman de, iii. 211.

Simpson, Patrick, a Scottish minister, iv. 44, 47.

Simpson, a priest, ii. 263.

Sinclair, bishop of Dunkeld, repulses the English at Donibristle, i. 130; officiates at Baliol's coronation, 167.

Sinclair, Henry, dean of Glasgow, iii. 76.

Sinclair, James, governor of the Orkney Islands, ii. 349.

Sinclair, Oliver, favourite of James V., ii. 374.

Sinclair, Sir Walter, at Homildon, ii. 25.

Sinclair, Patrick, ii. 329 *n*, 346.
Sinclair, president of the Session, iii. 72.
Sinclair, Sir William, hostage for Earl of Douglas, ii. 37.
Sinclair, William, earl of Orkney, 285.
Sinclair, Lady Beatrix, ii. 135.
Sixtus IV., Pope, ii. 206.
Skene, Sir John, iv. 176.
Skipton burnt by Bruce, i. 135.
Skirmishur, or Scrimgeour, Alexander, appointed constable of Dundee, i. 58.
Slaines, castle of, iv. 169, 191, 225.
Slaughter hill, ii. 23.
Sleat, Donald of, ii. 349.
Smeaton, Thomas, moderator of the General Assembly, 1579, iv. 22, 43, 46, 47, 53.
Snowdon, herald to the King of Denmark, ii. 270.
Soissons, Guy, bishop of, ambassador of Philip of France, i. 106.
Solway Moss, battle of, ii. 374.
Somerset, Duke of, ii. 163.
Somerset, Duke of, iii. 52, 57-60, 63, 64.
Somerset, Thomas, iv. 314.
Somerville, Lord, ii. 374, iii. 5, 17, 19.
Somerville, Lord, iii. 285, 325.
Somerville, Master of, ii. 143.
Somerville of Carnwath, Thomas, ii. 57.
Somerville, Tom of, ii. 195, 196.
Song, the oldest Scottish, i. 24.
Soulis, Nicholas de, competitor for the Scottish crown, i. 34.
Soulis, John, sent to France, i. 74; exempted from clemency, 78; slain at the battle of Tagher, 127.
Soulis, Lord, conspiracy to make him king, i. 142; he is seized, imprisoned, and dies, 142.
Southwell, Lady, iv. 314.
"Sow," the, used at the siege of Berwick, i. 137.
Spalding, a citizen of Berwick, betrays the town to Bruce, i. 133.
Spain, i. 140.
"Spanish Blanks," iv. 187, 189, 208.
Spanish fleet beats the English, ii. 86.
Spectres, belief in, i. 22.
Spens, John, of Perth, ii. 84.
Spens, Mr John, iii. 239, 278.
Spens of Wormiston, iii. 340, 341.
Spence, bishop of Aberdeen, ii. 217.
Spence, a friar, iii. 21.
Spencer, the poet, iv. 266.
Spey, the forest of, i. 233.
Spey, the river, i. 233.
Spinola, a Spanish admiral, iv. 306.
Spiny, Lord, iv. 194, 212.
Spurs, the battle of, ii. 286.
St Abb's Head, iii. 56, 68.
St Andrew, patron saint of Scotland, i. 57.
St Andrews, Gamelin, bishop of, i. 6.
St Albans, Edward I. makes a pilgrimage to, i. 68.
St Andrews, the city of, burned by Edward I., i. 65, 358 *n*.
St Andrews, foundation of university of, ii. 43.
St Andrews, Adamson, archbishop of, iv. 78, 79, 92, 149.
St Andrews, Archbishop of, ii. 294.
St Anthony's chapel, iii. 119.
St Bartholomew, massacre of, iii. 345, iv. 43.
St Bees' Priory plundered by Douglas, i. 128.
St Bridget, sanctuary of, ii. 192.
St Colm, Lord, iii. 159.
St Colm's Inch, ii. 362.
St Clair, the house of, ii. 200.
St Cuthbert, banner of, ii. 290.
St Duthac, sanctuary of, violated by the Earl of Ross, i. 94.
St Giles, image of, iii. 82.
St John, John de, crowns Baliol at Scone, i. 38.
St John of Beverley, i. 60.
St John of Jerusalem, knights of, iii. 133.
St John's Wood, iv. 130.
St Johnston, iii. 174, 202.
St Michael, order of, iii. 34.
St Michael, church of, ii. 289.
St Monans, iii. 68.
St Sabinus, the Cardinal, pronounces sentence of excommunication against Bruce and his adherents, i. 98.
St Salvator's college, ii. 90.
St Thomas the Martyr, shrine of, i. 67.
St Thomas à Becket, Edward I. makes a pilgrimage to the shrine of, i. 73.
Stafford, Lord, iv. 137.
Stanhope Park, the Scots encamp at, i. 152.
Stanley, Sir William, ii. 263.
Stanley, Sir Edward, ii. 293.
Star-chamber, iv. 143.
Starrhead, an Englishman, ii. 283.
Statute passed after the battle of Harlaw, ii. 42, 377 *n*.
Stenhouse, Hamilton of, iii. 23.
Stenhouse, Laird of, iii. 69.
Steward, the, joins Wallace, i. 50; afterwards submits to Edward I., 51.
Steward, Walter, High, of Scotland, intrusted with a command at Bannockburn, i. 115; marries Marjory, the daughter of Bruce, 126; accompanies Bruce to the Western Isles, 128; a son is born to him, 129; his wife dies, 129; made governor of Berwick, 134; his measures for the defence of the town and castle, 134; successfully repels the assaults of the English, 138; his untimely death, 147.
Steward, Robert, the, of Scotland, escapes from Bute, i. 176; takes refuge in Dumbarton castle, 176; storms the castle of Dunoon, 176; his successes in the west of Scotland, 176; elected to the joint-regency, 176; is chosen sole governor of Scotland, 184; besieges Perth, 185; the defenders, panic-stricken by an eclipse, surrender, 186; compels the surrender of Stirling castle, 186; re-establishes order, 187; draws off his troops at the battle of Durham, 192; is elected regent, 193; takes up arms against David II., 212; submits to the royal clemency, and renews his oath of allegiance, 213; is cast into prison, 213; is present at the Parliament of 1364, 218; promises to maintain order in Strathern, &c. 227.
Stewart, Sir Allan, slain by Sir P. Thornton, ii. 153.
Stewart, Alexander, son of Duke Murdoch, executed at Stirling, ii. 59.
Stewart, Andrew, bishop of Moray, ii. 224.
Stewart, Alexander, son of the Wolf of Badenoch, strange marriage of, with Isabella, countess of Mar, ii. 29; assumes the

title of Earl of Mar, 29; turns pirate, 36; marches against Donald of the Isles, battle of Harlaw, 41; admitted to the confidence of James I., 57; one of the jury that tried Murdoch duke of Albany, 59, 79; his death, 85.
Stewart, Alexander, son of Alexander duke of Albany, ii. 309.
Stewart, Duncan, son of the Wolf of Badenoch, ii. 3.
Stewart, Sir Alexander, ii. 126.
Stewart, Hercules, iv. 230.
Stewart, Colonel, iv. 49, 60, 61, 64, 66, 68, 74, 104, 176.
Stewart, Henry, Lord Methven, iv. 90.
Stewart, Henry, son of Lord Evandale, ii. 330, 331, 334, 343.
Stewart, Sir John, created earl of Athole, ii. 171.
Stewart, Sir John, ii. 57.
Stewart of Lorn, Sir John, hostage for Earl of Douglas, ii. 37.
Stewart, Sir James, married to queen-mother of James II., ii. 126, 142.
Stewart, James, son of Duke of Albany, sacks Dunfermline, ii. 60; escapes to Ireland, 60; his death, 63.
Stewart, Sir James, slain by Sir P. Thornton, ii. 153.
Stewart of Bonkill, Sir John, joins Wallace, i. 6; slain at the battle of Falkirk, 64.
Stewart, John, lord of Lorn, ii. 126.
Stewart, Robert, conspires against James I., ii. 87-90, 93.
Stewart, Walter, earl of Athole, conspires against James I., 87, 89, 93.
Stewart, Lord Murdoch, son of Duke of Albany, ii. 7; made prisoner at Homildon, 25; is committed to the Tower, 44; is liberated, 45; succeeds his father in the regency, 47; is arrested by James I., tried and condemned, 58, 59; is executed at Stirling, 59.
Stewart of Traquair, iv. 72.
Stewart, Sir Walter, ii. 43.
Stewart of Ralston, Sir Walter, ii. 35.
Stewart, Sir William, put to death by Percy, ii. 26.
Stewart, Sir William, iv. 180.
Stewart, Sir William, iv. 163, 165.
Stewart, Walter, imprisoned, tried, and condemned, ii. 58, 59; is executed at Stirling, 59.
Stewart, Lord Darnley, slain, ii. 126.
Stewart, Catherine, mother of Patrick Hamilton, ii. 342.
Stewart, Margaret, wife of Knox, iii. 357.
Stirling, rout of the Scottish army at, i. 78; 360 *n.*
Stirling castle, Sir Philip de Mowbray agrees conditionally to surrender, i. 113; surrendered to the Scots, i. 123.
Stirling, battle of, i. 53, 357 *n.*
Stirling, Alexander, slain at Harlaw, ii. 41.
Stirling of Glorat, iii. 26.
Stornoway, castle of, ii. 275, 276.
Stow the historian, ii. 129.
Straiton, Alexander, slain at Harlaw, ii. 41.
Straiton, David, a Protestant martyr, ii. 355, 355 *n.*
Straiton, Walter, page to James I., ii. 91.
Strathavon, iv. 223.
Strathbrair, iv. 277.
Strathbogie, iii. 166, 167.
Strathbogie blown up by James VI., iv. 225.
Strathern, David, earl of, ii. 87, 88.
Strathern, David, earl of, i. 328.
Strathern, Earl of, despatched to Scotland, i. 5.
Strathern, Malise, earl of, ii. 131, 131 *n.*
Strathern, Countess of, confesses to a conspiracy against the life of Bruce, i. 142.
Strathnaver, ii. 70.
Strowan, Robertson of, ii. 92, 392 *n.*
Strozzi, Leo, prior of Capua, iii. 53, 67, 71.
Strozzi, Peter, iii. 67.
Sturmy, John, an English naval commander, i. 114.
Suffolk, Duke of, ii. 143.
Suffolk, Duke of, iii. 15, 82.
Suffolk, Duchess of, iii. 55.
Sully, Henry de, made prisoner by Bruce, i. 145.
Sully, French minister of state, iv. 274.
Sumptuary laws, ii. 77, 170, 181.
Surrey, Earl of, ii. 270, 282, 288-294, 296, 297, 323, 324, 326, 327, 327 *n.*, 329.
Surrey, Countess of, ii. 271.
"Susannah and the Elders," i. 296.
Sussex, Earl of, iii. 294, 297, 315, 317.
Sussex, Earl of, iii. 327-330, 332-334.
Sussex, Earl of, an English envoy, iv. 218, 219.
Sutherland, Earl of, cut off by the plague, i. 210.
Sutherland, Earl, iii. 325, iv. 25, 49.
Sweden, King of, iii. 163, 171.
Swinton, Sir John, at Homildon, ii. 25.

T

Tagher, battle of, i. 127; Scots discomfited and Edward Bruce slain, 127; his remains barbarously mutilated by the English, 127.
Talbot, Lord Richard, married the daughter of the Red Comyn, i. 175; is taken prisoner by Sir W. Keith, 175.
Talbot, Lord Thomas, banner of, taken by the Scots, ii. 13.
Talbot, Henry, son of Earl of Shrewsbury, iv. 158.
Talla Moss, battle of, ii. 250.
Tamworth, Mr, iii. 208, 209.
Tantallan castle, ii. 59, 71.
Tarbet, Bruce drags his ships across the Isthmus of, i. 128.
Tarnaway, castle of, ii. 341, 341 *n.*
Taxation in the reign of James I., ii. 53, 65.
Taylor, Darnley's page, iii. 238.
Tell True, a hound, iv. 99.
Tempest, Sir Thomas, ii. 348.
Temple, chapel of, i. 90.
Templeliston, now Kirkliston, Edward I. remains at, i. 61.
Tenantry, laws affecting, ii. 205.
Terouen, ii. 287.
Terregles, iii. 65.
Teviot, the, iii. 29.
Tewkesbury, battle of, ii. 206.
Thames, the, ii. 282.
The Lion, Barton's ship, ii. 280, 282.

"The Doctrine of a Christian Man," treatise of, ii. 356.
The "Foul Raid," ii. 46.
Theba, battle of, i. 162.
Thomas, Bruce's brother, hanged by the English, i. 98.
Thomas, Valentine, iv. 265.
Thomas de la More's testimony to the clemency of Bruce, i. 134.
Thomson, John, a Carrick leader, i. 127, 173.
Thornton, a messenger, iii. 213.
Thornton, Sir Patrick, ii. 153.
Thrieve, a fortress, ii. 164.
Throckmorton, Sir Nicholas, iii. 122; his interview with the Cardinal Lorraine, 133; his interview with Queen Mary, 134; unfolds the policy of the French court, 135; sketch of Queen Mary, 137, 138; his interviews with her, 142, 143; his opinion of Moray, 144, 146-148; his interview with Mary, 149; writes to Cecil regarding the intercepting of the queen, 150; his interview with Mary, and her remarks on the refusal of Elizabeth to grant her a passport, 151; his excuse of the conduct of Elizabeth, 152; his mission to Scotland in 1565, 197, 198; in 1567, 259, 263, 264; his interview with the confederate leaders, 266; the utter hopelessness of his interference, 267; refuses to countenance the proceedings of the confederacy, 269; his interview with Tullibardine and Lethington, 270, 271; intercedes for Mary, 271, 272; his interview with Moray, 276, 278; is favourable to the marriage of Mary with the Duke of Norfolk, 310, 311.
Throckmorton, Francis, iv. 83, 113, 114.
Tile-maker, a Scottish, is granted royal letters to visit London, i. 219, 220.
Till, the river, ii. 289, 290.
Tilney, Charles, one of the Babington conspiracy, iv. 117.
Tiree, isle of, ii. 350.
Titchbourne, Chidiock, iv. 117.
Tixall, iv. 131, 132.
Tod, Sir Thomas, ii. 252, 253.
Tolbooth, the, ii. 309.
Tournay, ii. 316.
Tournament at Stirling, ii. 145.
Touraine, dukedom of, ii. 133.
Touton, battle of, ii. 190.
Tower of London, Baliol and his son confined in the, i. 45.
Towey, Laird of, iv. 222.
Towie castle, iii. 342.
Trabrown, Laird of, iii. 288.
Trade, lucrative, with England and the Continent, i. 209.
Tranent, iii. 241.
Treaty of Northampton, i. 155; its terms, 155.
Trent, council of, iii. 136, iv. 1.
Tresham, iv. 312.
Treaty of Maghus of Norway with Alexander III., ii. 190.
Trinity Church, iii. 338.
Troupe, Hameline, conspires against Bruce, i. 142.
Truce with England, ii. 122.
Tullibardine, baron of, ii. 237.
Tullibardine, Murray of, iii. 95, 256, 270, 270 *n.*, 278, 293, 323, iv. 12.
Tulloch, Bishop of Orkney, ii. 199, 209.
Turkey, iii. 290.
Turnberry castle, the residence of the Countess of Carrick, i. 19; meeting of nobles in, 25.
Turnbull, Sir William, ii. 237.
Turnbull, William, bishop of Glasgow, ii. 162.
Turner, Dawson, iii. 215.
Tutbury, iii. 310, 313.
Twelve competitors for the crown of Scotland, i. 34.
Twenge, Sir Marmaduke, at the battle of Stirling, i. 54; surrenders himself to Bruce, 122; is dismissed without ransom, 122.
Twiselhaugh, ii. 289.
Tyburn, iv. 135.
Tycho Brahe, iv. 172.
Tyler, Wat, insurrection of, i. 334.
Tynedale, ravaged by the Scottish army, i. 44; ravaged by Bruce, 108.
Tyrone, Lord, iv. 162, 234, 240, 267, 268.
Tytler, the historian, iii. 306.

U

Ughtred, Sir Thomas, i. 144; his defence of Perth, 185.
Ulster, Earl of, his daughter the wife of Bruce, i. 94.
Ulster, Lionel, duke of, mysterious transaction of, i. 193; dies in Italy, 329.
Ulster, i. 113, 127.
Ulster, Richard de Burgh, earl of, opposes the claims of Margaret of Norway, i. 25; joins Edward I., 45; negotiates with the governor of Scotland, 78; treats with the governor of Stirling castle, 80.
Umfraville, Gilbert de, earl of Angus, refuses to surrender to the English the castles of Dundee and Forfar, i. 33; surrenders them, 33; does homage to Edward I., 42; resides at the court of England, 66; commanded to reside upon his lands, 223.
Umfraville, Ingeram de, surrenders the castle of Dumbarton to Edward I., i. 45.
Umfraville, Sir Robert, vice-admiral of England, ii. 39, 46, 49.
Umfraville, Gilbert, earl of Angus, ii. 39.
Universities of Scotland, ii. 268.
Upsal, iv. 172.
Uranibourg, iv. 172.
Urbind, Antony, bishop of, ii. 123.
Urnebrig, a German manufacturer of gunpowder, ii. 284.
Urquhart castle, Inverness, ii. 152.

V

Vagabonds, law against, ii. 67.
Vaison, Drummond, bishop of, iv. 309-311.
Valence, Bishop of, iii. 119, 122, 135, 136.
Valois, Francis of, Dauphin of Vienne, ii. 278.
Vans, Mr Martin, confessor to James III., ii. 200.
Varennes, the sieur de, French ambassador at the English court, i 107.
Vaughan, an emissary of England, ii. 278.
Vendome, Duke of, in Scotland, ii. 47.
Vendosme, Duke of, ii. 356.

Venetians, the, ii. 277.
Verac, Monsieur, iii. 327, 337, 358, 359.
Verneuil, defeat of the Scots at, ii. 63, 121, 123.
Vicci, Benemund de, the Pope's emissary, sent into Scotland to collect the tenth of the ecclesiastical benefices, i. 20.
Vienne, John de, his expedition to Scotland, i. 338; the magnitude of his force, 339; the discontent which their presence excites, 339; he joins in the invasion of England, 340; his impatience at the tactics of the Scots, 341; failure of the expedition, 342; he returns to France, 343.
Vellebresme, French ambassador, ii. 300.
Villegagnon, Monsieur, iii. 68.
Villemore, comptroller, iii. 75.
Villeroy, a French gentleman, iii. 262.
Villours, Sebastian de, iii. 259.
Vincennes, treaty of, i. 329.
Vipont, Alan, surprises Kinross fort, i. 197.

W

Waad, Mr, a privy councillor, iv. 130, 131.
Wakefield, battle of, ii. 189, 190.
Wales, the Scots make descents on the coast, i. 129.
Wallace of Craigie, Sir Adam, ii. 215.
Wallace of Craigie, Sir John, mortally wounded at the battle of the Sark, ii. 143.
Wallace of Ellerslie, Sir Malcolm, i. 48.
Wallace, Sir William, son of Sir Malcolm Wallace of Ellerslie, his personal appearance, i. 48; quarrels with some English officers in Lanark, and only escapes being slain by the assistance of his mistress, 49; she is put to death by the English sheriff, and in retaliation Wallace slays him, 49; is proclaimed a traitor, 49; is joined by those who had refused submission to Edward, 49; is elected chief, 49; his early successes, 49; is joined by Sir William Douglas, 49; surprises the English justiciary at Scone, and disperses his followers, 50; is joined by some of the most powerful of the Scottish nobility, 50; his cruel treatment of the English ecclesiastics, 50; is joined by the younger Bruce and his tenants, 50; dissensions among the Scottish barons compel him to retire northwards, 51; ravages the lands of the Bishop of Glasgow, 51; the people flock to his standard, 52; resolves to oppose the advance of the English at Stirling bridge, 52; anticipates the English, 52; two friars sent to him by Surrey, with terms, 52; his memorable answer, 53; portion of the English army cross the Forth, when they are assailed by him from the high ground, 54; complete discomfiture of the English army, 54; he orders so much of the skin of Cressingham to be made into a sword-belt, 55; he occupies Dundee, 55; sends Walter de Haliburton to occupy Berwick, 55; he invades England, 55; ravages Cumberland and Northumberland, and obtains immense booty, 56; he marches to Carlisle, but deems it prudent not to attack the city, 56; lays waste Cumberland and Annandale, 56; commences his retreat to Scotland, 57; reaches Hexham, 57; rescues three monks from the barbarity of his followers, 57; he advances on Newcastle, but retires homewards, 57; is elected governor of Scotland, 58; his measures to procure fresh levies, 58; compels the most powerful of the nobles to submit to his authority, 58; he invests Roxburgh castle, 59; retires on the appearance of the English army, 59; is deserted by many of the great nobles, 60; his plan for the defence of Scotland, 61; proofs of the wisdom of his plan, 62; his position at Falkirk betrayed to the English, 62; from the great disparity in numbers, he first designs to retreat, 63; he finds that impossible and prepares to fight, 63; the battle of Falkirk, 64; great loss of the Scots, 64; he retreats, 64; he resigns the office of governor, 64; he is driven with a small band to the woods and mountains, 77; he is excluded from mercy by the English king, 78; he proposes conditions of surrender which throws the English king into ungovernable rage, 78; a price set upon his head, 78; is betrayed by Sir John Menteith, 81; is carried to London and arraigned for treason, 82; he repels the charge, 82; is put to death with great cruelty, 82 *n.*, 261; the effect of his death on the designs of Edward I., 83, 362 *n.*
Wallace tower, iii. 361.
Walsingham, David II. visits, i. 214.
Walsingham, Sir Francis, iv. 4-6, 6 *n.*; remonstrates in a letter with Elizabeth on her apathy, 6; writes again to her, 7; intercepts letters which shew the ramifications of the Popish league, 19; his instructions to Sir R. Bowes, 26, 32, 34, 48, 56; tries to discover the religious sentiments of the Duke of Lennox, 56, 59; is cognisant of the combination against Guthrie, 60, 64; complains of the parsimony of Elizabeth, 65; arrives at the Scottish court, 68, 69; returns to England, 69, 93; is appealed to by Angus and the banished lords, 97, 101; discovers the Babington conspiracy, 112; his efforts to entangle Queen Mary in the plots against Elizabeth, 114-128; unfolds to Elizabeth the extent of their plots, 130; is one of the commissioners on the trial of Mary, 137; writes to Leicester on the question of Mary's guilt, 143; urges the putting of Mary to death, 150; writes to Paulet recommending the secret assassination of Mary, 151; his letter to Secretary Maitland on the death of Mary, 151-167.
Warbeck, Perkin, ii. 259, 259 *n.*, 260-264, 393 *n.*
Wardhouse, Laird of, iv. 179.
Wardlaw, Walter, a parliamentary commissioner, i. 211.
Wardlaw, Henry, bishop of St Andrews, intrusted with the education of James I., ii. 30; founds University of St Andrews, 43.
Ware, town of, iii. 212.
Wareham, William de, ii. 265.
Wark castle taken by Bruce, i. 135; siege of, ii. 326, 327, 327 *n.*; stormed, i. 341.
Warkworth castle, iii. 315.
Warenne, John, Earl of Surrey, made guardian of Scotland, i. 47.
Warwick, Earl of, ii. 179, 185, 193, 206.
Warwick, Earl of, iii. 302, iv. 137.

Wat, a craftsman, iv. 253.
Water of Crie, battle of, i. 104.
Watson, a Scottish preacher, iv. 252, 255.
Wear, the Scots encamp on the river, i. 151; defy the English to drive them from their position, 151.
Wedderburn, Lord Home of, his ferocity, ii. 311, 315, 316, 319, 348.
Wedderburn house, ii. 311, 312.
Welsh, John, a Scottish preacher, iv. 254.
Welsh, rebellion of the, i. 41.
Wemyss, Laird of, iii. 68, 76, iv. 173.
Wemyss Castle, iii. 188.
Wemyss, Easter, iii. 46.
West Riding cruelly sacked by Bruce, i. 129.
Westminster Cathedral, the famous stone on which the kings of Scotland were crowned, placed in, by Edward I., i. 46.
Westminster, secret conference of David II. and Edward III. at, i. 214.
Westmoreland, people of, purchase a truce from Bruce, i. 110.
Westmoreland, Earl of, iii. 302, 306, 310, 314, 315, 322, 324.
Wharton, Sir Thomas, iii. 17.
Wharton, Lord, invades Scotland, iii. 46, 47, 63, 65, 66, 69, 78.
Whitaker, iii. 306.
Whitehall, palace of, iv. 312.
Whitehaugh, Laird of, iii. 228.
Whitelaw, secretary of James III., ii. 228, 230, 245.
Whitelaw, Alexander, iii. 105, 109.
Whitgift, archbishop of Canterbury, iv. 313.
Whittingham, iii. 235, 237, 274.
Whitsum, Hepburn of, iii. 193.
Wickliffe, doctrines first preached in Scotland, ii. 37.
Willcock, John, a Protestant convert, iii. 82, 91, 112, 121.
Willford, Captain Sir James, iii. 67-69.
William the Lion, i. 83.
Williams, Friar, iii. 9, 20.
Williamson, an English ecclesiastic, ii. 300, 302.
Wilson, Stephen, iii. 359.
Winchelsea, archbishop of Canterbury, demurs to the supplies demanded by Edward I., i. 48; conveys a papal bull to Edward I., 70.
Winchester, bishop of Moray, ii. 128.
Wingfield, iv. 152.
Winkfield, Babington's residence, iv. 121.
Winter, English admiral, iii. 117, 119.
Wishart's (Chancellor) mission to England, i. 9.
Wishart, bishop of Scotland, regent of Scotland, i. 25; he supplies the robes for the coronation of Bruce, 89; confined by the English in Berwick castle, 94; ransomed by Bruce, 123.
Wishart, George, commonly known as the Martyr, iii. 41; his parentage, 41; is schoolmaster in Montrose, 41; flies to England, where he openly recants, 41; returns to Scotland, 41, 42 *n.*; he preaches in Montrose, &c., 41, 375 *n.*; accepts an invitation to Edinburgh, 42; preaches at Leith, 42; powerfully affects John Knox, 42; removes for safety by the advice of his friends to West Lothian, 43; is taken prisoner, 43; the governor refuses to give a civil sanction to the proceedings against him, 43; is arraigned at St Andrews before the spiritual tribunal, 43; his defence, 44; is condemned to the stake for heresy, 44; his last moments, 44, 45.
Wishart of Pittarro, James, iii. 41.
Wishart of Pittarrow, iii. 85, 95, 360.
Wishart, of the English faction, iii. 22.
Withern, prior of, iii. 172, 173.
Wittemberg, ii. 342.
Wolsey, Cardinal, ii. 306, 307, 316, 317, 322, 325, 329, 331, 335.
Woodstreet, iv. 129.
Wood, secretary of Regent Moray, iii. 159, 290, 291, 300, 310, 312.
Wood, Sir Andrew, a naval commander, ii. 219, 236, 238, 251, 252, 254, 261, 266, 274, 275, 286, 395 *n.*
Woodhouselee, iii. 319.
Woods, *&c.*, laws regarding, ii. 183.
Wool, annual tax upon, i. 217; taxed by the crown, 230.
Worcester, Earl of, iii. 302, iv. 137, 177, 178.
Workington, iii. 288, 289.
Wortley, an English knight, ii. 5.
Wotton, Dr Nicholas, iii. 80, 122, 125.
Wotton, Sir Edward, iv. 96-100, 102-105, 110.
Wrath, Cape, i. 17.
Wylloughby, Lord, iv. 273, 274, 274 *n.*, 278, 285, 298, 301.

X

Xaintonge, earldom of, ii. 178, 208, 309.

Y

Yellow Carvel, the, one of the ships of Sir Andrew Wood, ii. 251.
Yester, Lord, iii. 254, 285, 325.
Yetholm, i. 81.
Yetholm, Scots assemble at, i. 345.
York, Edward I. summons the nobility of Scotland to meet him at, i. 60.
York, Richard duke of, ii. 143, 152, 163, 179, 190.
Young, James, a schoolmaster of James VI., iv. 4.
Young, Peter, a minister, iv. 42, 218.
Ypres, magistrates of, i. 170.

Z

Zouch, Lord, iv. 137, 212-214, 216, 227.

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